

# SHAKTI AND SHĀKTA.

ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES ON THE  
SHĀKTA TANTRASHĀSTRA.

(306)

By

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## PREFACE

With the exception of the four articles "What are the Tantras", "Shakti and Shākta", "Shakti and Māyā" and "Garland of Letters", which first appeared in the "Prabuddha Bhārata", "Modern Review", "Indian Philosophical Review" and "East and West" respectively; this work represents the series of lectures delivered by me at the request of, and before, the Vivekānanda Society at Calcutta at the end of the last and the commencement of the present year.

These papers are the first attempt to give in a popular form an unbiassed, authenticated and intelligible account of the chief features of the hitherto much abused Shākta Tantra Shāstra. I have endeavoured to explain myself as simply and as lucidly as the subject admits from an entirely detached and unprejudiced standpoint. In giving an account of Indian beliefs, we who are foreigners must place ourselves in the position of a Hindu and not look at them through Western glasses. It is difficult, I know, for most to do this; but until they can, their work lacks real value. In the case of the Shākta Tantra, there has been hitherto no examination at all. The fact that there have been abuses as regard certain forms of ritual and magic has been considered to justify a neglect of the whole subject. Whilst I have written from the point of view of the Shākta (whose doctrine I value highly) I do not commit myself to every thing, such for example as animal sacrifice, which an orthodox Shākta may hold. Thus again the comparative value of Kundalini and other Yogas is still with me a matter of enquiry as is also the origin and history of the Shāstra and other matters. I refer those who wish to pursue further a subject, which, I have found of great interest, to the other works on Tantra Shāstra which, I have published under the name 'Arthur Avalon' with the assistance of others and, in particular, in co-operation with my friend R. R. : to give him his Rāshi name, for his modesty will not permit me to mention any other. I refer my reader also to the series of essays on the Mantra Shāstra which I wrote for the Vedānta Kesari which will be completed this year and published under the title "Studies in the Mantra Shāstra", that being a designation of the Tantra Shāstra, since the latter is a repository of Mantra-vidyā.

A critic of my paper which appeared in the Indian Philosophical Review has taken exception to my statement that the Classical Sāṅkhya conceals a Vedāntic solution behind its dualistic presentment.

15 for Vyapāra read 'Vyāpāra

Last line but four for 'Vedānta Paribhāsa read  
'Vedānta Paribhāṣā'.

15 for "Chidhabhāsa" read "Chidābhāsa".

2 for "Kartitva" read "Kartṛitva".

line 15 from bottom ; for 8,40000 read 8,400,000.

Sanskrit quotation for "Deshakālapadārthātma" read  
'Deshakālapadārthātma' and for "tattadrūpena" read  
'tattadrūpena.'

5 of second paragraph for "bhāvanāyā" read "bhā-  
vanayā".

4 for "Bhavārūpamajñānam " read " Bhāvarūpama-  
jñānam".

14 from bottom ; for "Svarūpāvarāṇa" read "Svarūpa-  
varāṇa".

5 for "Svatasiddha" read "Svatahsiddha".

Second para [line 2 and p. 134 line 3 ; for "Svādish-  
thāna" read "Svādhishthāna".

First para three lines from bottom for "Chittashuddhi"  
read "Chittashuddhi".

Last line for "suchi" read "shuchi".

2 for "Brahmanishtha, Brahnavādi, Brāhmi. Brahms-  
parayana" read "Brahmanishtha, Brahnavādi, Brāhmi,  
Brahmaparāyana.

20 from top ; for "aspects" read "aspect"

Second para l. 2 for "shava" read "śavā".

Last line for "Sāmarakya" read "Sāmarasya".

14 from top for "Brahman" read "Brahman".

Last line but three and p. 163 last line but two ; for  
'Vāmā" read "Vāma".

15 from top ; for "Paishākika" read "Paishāchika".

6 from top ; for "Virā" read "Vira".

14 for "brumadhye" read "bhṛumadhye".

Last line but one ; for "Yoga bhogayate, mokshayate  
sangśāra" read "Yogo bhogāyate mokshāyate sang-  
śārah".

First para last line but two ; for "Sākshma" read  
'Sūkshma".

13 from top ; for "tactie" read "tactile".

from top for "foreign to you can" read "foreign to you.

Can

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## WHAT ARE THE TANTRAS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE ?

A very common expression is "The Tantra"; but its use is often due to a misconception and leads to others. For what does Tantra mean? The word denotes injunction (Vidhi) regulation (Niyama) Shâstra generally or treatise. Thus Shaugkara calls the Sâmkhya, a Tantra. We cannot speak of "The Treatise" nor of "The Tantra" any more than we can or do speak of the Purâna, the Samhitâ. We can speak of the Tantras as we do of the Purânas. These Tantras are Shâstras of what is called the Âgama? In a review of one of my works it was suggested that the Âgama is a class of scriptures dealing with the worship of Saguna Ī-hvara which was revealed at the close of the age of the age of the Upanishads and introduced partly because of the falling into desuetude of the Vaidik Āchâra and partly because of the increasing numbers of persons entering the Hindu fold who were not competent (Adhikâri) for that Āchâra. I will not however deal with this historical question beyond noting the fact that the Âgama is open to all persons of all castes and both sexes and is not subject to the restrictions of the Vaidika Āchâra.

The Âgamas are divided into two main groups according as the Īshṭadevatâ worshipped is Shiva or Vishnu or into three, if the Shâkta Âgama be counted as a separate division. The first is the Shaivâgama and the second the Vaishnava Âgama or Pancharâtra. This is the Scripture to which the Sreimad Bhâgavata refers as Sâttvata Tantra in the lines.

*Tenoktang sâttvatang tantram*

*Yat jñâteḥ muktibhâg bhavet*

*Yatra strîśhûdrâdâśanâṅg*

*Saṅgskâro vaishnavah smritah*

According to a quotation which has been given me from the Vâyu Samhitâ the latter speaks of a twofold Shaivâgama namely one which is based on Shruti and another independent of it

*Shaivâgamepi dvividha shrouto' shroutashcha sangsmritah*

*Shroutisâramayah shroutah sratantastvitaromatah.*

We must however in all cases distinguish between what a School says of itself and what others say of it. So far as I am aware all

Āgamas, whatever be their origin, claim now to be based on Śaṁṛiti, though of course as different interpretations are put on Śaṁṛiti, those who accept one interpretation are apt to speak of differing Schools as heretical. These main divisions again have subdivisions. Thus there are several Schools of Śhaivas; and there are Śhāktas. There is for instance the Northern Śhaiva School called Trīka of Kṛmānī in which at one time the Tantra Śāstra was very prevalent. There is again the Southern Śhaiva School called Śhaivasiddhānta. The Śhaivas who are to be found throughout India are largely prevalent in Bengal and Assam. The Śhāktas are rather allied with the Advaita Śhaiva than with the others, though in them also there is worship of Śhakti. Śhiva and Śhakti are one and he who worships one necessarily worships the other. But whereas the Śhaiva predominantly worships Śhiva the Śhāktas predominantly worships the Śhakti side of the Advaita Śhaiva Āditi which is both Śhiva and Śhakti. A common philosophical basis of those Śhāktas who are Āgamas is the Śhāstra of the thirty six Tattvas. These are referred to in the Tantras well known in Bengal which is called Kūṭānaya. These are also found in other Śhāktas works and their commentaries such as the Anandādhāra. The Śhāradā Tīkha a great authority amongst the Bengali Śhāktas is the work of Lakṣmanāchāryya an author of the Kashmiri Śhaiva school. The latter school as also the Śhāktas are Advaitas. The Śhaiva Siddhānta and Pancharātra are Viśiṣṭādvaitas. There is also a great body of Buddhist Tantras of differing schools. Now all these schools have Tantras of their own. The original separation of the Śhaiva schools is shown, amongst other things, by the fact that some Tantras are common such as Mrigendra and Matanga Tantras. It has been asserted that the Śhāktas school is not historically connected with the Śhaivas. No grounds were given for this statement. Whatever be the historical origins of the former, the two appear to be in several respects allied at present as any one who knows Śhāktas literature may find out for himself. In fact Śhāktas literature is in part an intelligible and more acquainted with with some features of what is called the later Darśhana. The Śhāktas have again been divided into three groups. Thus Pānḍit R. Ananta Śhāstri in the introduction to his edition of the Kṛmānī speaks of the Kaula Śhāstras with sixty four Tantras; the Mūrtas with eight Tantras; and the Samaya group which are said to be the most important of the Śhāktas Āgamas of which five are mentioned. This classification purports to be based on the nature of the object pursued according as it belongs to one or other of the Puruṣārtha.

As so explained the classification seems too neat and artificial to be altogether historically accurate. I express here no opinion on the point. Pancharâtra literature is very considerable, one hundred and eight works being mentioned by the same Pandit in Vol. XIII. p. 357-363 of the "Theosophist". I would refer the reader also to the very valuable and recent edition of the Âhirbhadhnya Samhitâ by my friend Dr. Otto Schrader with an Introduction by the learned Doctor on the Pancharâtra system where many Vaishnava Tantras and Samhitâs are cited. The Trika school has many Tantras of which the leading one is Mâlinivijayâ. The Svachchhanda Tantra comes next. Jagadisha Chandra Chattopâdhyaya Vidyâvâridhi has written with learning and lucidity on this school. The Shaivasiddhânta has twenty eight leading Tantras and a large number of Upâgamas such as Târaka Tantra, Vâma Tantra and others which will be found enumerated in Nallasvami Pillar's "Studies in Shaiva Siddhânta" (p. 294) and Sivajnânasiddhiyar (p. 211). There is thus a vast mass of Tantras in the Âgamas belonging to differing schools of doctrine and practice.

When these Âgamas have been examined and are better known, it will be found that they are but variant aspects of *the same general ideas and practices*. As instances of general ideas I may cite the following:—the conception of Deity as a supreme Personality (Parahantâ) and of the double aspect of God in one of which He really is or becomes the Universe; a true emanation from Him in His creative aspect, successive emanations (Abhâsa, Vyûha) as of "fire from fire" from subtle to gross; doctrine of Shakti; pure and impure creation; the denial of unconscious Mâyâ such as Shankara teaches; doctrine of Mâyâ Kosha and the Kanchukas (the six Shaiva Kanchukas being represented by the possibly earlier classification in the Pancharâtra of three Sankocha); the carrying of the origin of things up and beyond Purusha-Prakriti; acceptance at a later stage of Purusha-Prakriti, the Sankhyân Gunas, and evolution of Tattvas as applied to the doctrine of Shakti; affirmance of the reality of the Universe; emphasis on devotion (Bhakti); provision for all castes and both sexes.

Instances of common practice are for example Mantra, Bija, Yantra, Mudrâ, Nyâsa, Bhûtasuddhi, Kundaliyoga, construction and consecration of temples and images (Kriyâ), religious and social observances (Chârya) such as Âhnikâ, Varnâshramadharma, Utsava; and practical magic (Mâyâyoga).

Where there is Mantra Yantra Nyâsa Dikshâ Gur and the like there is Tantra Shâstra. In fact one of the names of the latter is

**Mantra Shāstra** With these similarities there are certain variations of doctrine and practice between the schools. Thus as I have already said neither the Southern Shāivasiddhānta nor the Pancharātra are Advaita whereas the Northern Shāivāgama and the Shākta doctrine are; for both hold that Jivātma or Paramātmā are one, as Shankara's school also teaches. Necessarily also even on points of common similarity there is some variance in terminology and exposition which is unessential. Thus when looking at their broad features it is of no account whether with the Pancharātra we speak of Lakshmi Shakti, Vyūha, Samkocha; or whether in terms of other schools we speak of Tripurā-sundari and Mahakālī, Tattvas and Kāndukas. Again there are some differences in ritual which are not of great moment except in one and that a notable instance. I refer to the well-known division of worshippers into Dakṣiṇāchāra and Vāmāchāra. The antinomian Sādhana of some of the latter, (which I may here say is not usually understood) has acquired such notoriety that to most the term "The Tantra" connotes this particular worship and its abuses and nothing else. I may here also observe that it is a mistake to suppose that such doctrines and practices are aberrations peculiar to India. A Missionary wrote to me some years ago that this country was "a demon-haunted land." There are demons here, but they are not the only inhabitants; and what is found here has existed elsewhere. The antinomian doctrines and practices of the extremist schools are similar to those of certain Western sects, notably views and practices attributed to the Brethren of the Free Spirit. Antinomianism as an universal phenomenon is the extremist application of so called "Pantheistic" doctrines which as doctrines are held even by those who reject such practical application of them. For though this does not seem to be recognised, it is nevertheless the fact that these rites are philosophically based on doctrines which are the common property of all monistic schools. The difference consists in the fact that these common doctrines are practically applied in extremist fashion contrary to the ordinary forms of Dharma which under certain conditions these Sādhakas claim to surpass. Now it is this extremist doctrine and practice, limited at all times to comparatively few, which has come to be known as "The Tantra." Nothing is more incorrect. This extreme or "left wing" is but one division of worshippers who again are but one section of the numerous followers of the Āgamas, Shāiva, Shākta and Vaiṣṇava. Though there are certain common features which may be called Tāntrik one cannot speak of 'The Tantra' as though it were one entirely homoge doctrine

and practice. Still less can we identify it with the particular practices and theories of one division of worshippers only. Further the Tantras are concerned with Science, Law, Medicine and a variety of subjects other than spiritual doctrine or worship.

According to a common notion the word "Tantra" is (to use the language of a fairly well known work) "restricted to the necromantic books of the later Shivâic or Sakti mysticism" (Waddell's Buddhism of Tibet p. 164). As charity covers many sins so "mystic" and "mysticism" are words which cover much ignorance. "Necromancy" too looms unnecessarily large in writers of this school. It is however the fact that Western authors generally so understand the term "Tantra." They are however in error in so doing as previously explained. Here I shortly deal with the significance of the Tantra Shâstra which is of course also misunderstood, being generally spoken of as a jumble of "black magic," and "erotic mysticism" cemented together by a ritual which is "meaningless mummary." A large number of persons who talk in this strain have never had a Tantra in their hands and such orientalists as have read some portions of these Scriptures have not generally understood them otherwise they would not have found them to be so "meaningless." The use of this term implies that their content had no meaning to them. Very likely; for to define as they do Mantra as "mystical words," Mudrâ as "mystical gestures" and Yantra as "mystical diagrams" does not imply knowledge. These erroneous notions as to the nature of the Âgama are of course due to the mistaken identification of the whole body of the Scripture with one section of it. Further this last is only known through the abuses to which its dangerous practices as carried out by inferior persons have given rise. It is stated in the Shâstra itself in which they are prescribed that the path is full of difficulty and peril and he who fails upon it goes to Hell. That there are those who have so failed and others who have been guilty of evil magic is well known. I am not here concerned with this special ritual or magic but with the practices which govern the life of the vast mass of the Indian people to be found in the Tantras of the Âgamas of the different schools which I have mentioned.

In order to understand the significance of the Âgama composed of Tantras of varying schools some preliminary observations are necessary. Western writers (and some Indians influenced by their views) regard the Vedânta as a mere metaphysic, that is speculation. They suppose it to be like those philosophical systems of their own which were evolved

after orthodox Christianity had ceased to govern thought as it did in the middle ages. Let us picture in our minds for the moment such a philosopher. We think of a man who has passed through the usual academic curriculum in which he has been taught that previous speculation was a highly meritorious though unsuccessful search for truth. Having obtained his doctor's degree he sets out himself on the same apparently futile quest, either in the amiable if foolish belief that he will discover for the world this treasure, or with the less exalted motives supplied by the desire for intellectual amusement, personal fame or daily bread. In the course of this search it is probable that subscription will be made to the usual moral principles. It is however not generally felt that the moral nature of the philosopher affects the value of his speculation. Good mental endowment and learning are considered sufficient. With this and access to the works of the illustrious seekers of old, who are made to supply the instruments of their own destruction the philosopher in his study proceeds to evolve a "system" of his own and to gather round him disciples who remain faithful to their master until a rising sense of their own superiority, ambition, or mere bread and butter prompt them to desert him and to start a "system" of their own. This last holds precarious sway until displaced by another which appears in the course of the unending cycle of speculation. Something is doubtless gained in this process if only it be the discarding of manifest error and the more extensive circulation of philosophical ideas. The mental instrument is also sharpened for the uses to which a true spiritual doctrine will put it. Nothing happens without a purpose.

But according to Hindu notions it is not in this way that truth is found. Tarkâpratishthânât. A deeply read and powerful minded Western friend of mine was not disconcerted by the maxim. He confessed to me that he had no desire to discover the truth as he got so much amusement out of trying to find it. I told him he need be under no apprehensions of losing his pleasure. Hindu philosophy is of a different character and rests on a different basis. Its counterpart in the West is to be found in the works of the great Mediæval Scholastics of Catholicism. Neither they, nor the orthodox Hindu, sought by reason and interference to discover truth as if it were something not known. It was already in their possession having been communicated to them by the revealed Word. Their duty was limited to co-ordinating explaining and (so far as this was possible) making the Word understandable by the reason which also supplied its own grounds for their acceptance. For what is irrational can never be spiritually true. The

Word (Shabda) was to the Christian Scholastics the Old and New Testament and the living voice of the divinely inspired Church holding the deposit of tradition or Smṛiti which was based on it. Veda is spiritual experience. It is by Veda that the truth is known; it is on Veda that philosophy is based. The Vedānta is not a mere metaphysic in the Western sense as even Professor duessen, who so highly appreciates it, takes it to be. He asks the people of India to adhere to it. But why should they do so if it be a mere speculation? Why should they accept it rather than any other, for he does not allow the possibility of Yoga which verifies the doctrine.

Some Western writers are of opinion that the Tantra Shāstra was, at least in its origin, alien and indeed hostile to the Veda. One of them has said "We are strongly of opinion that in their essence the two principles are fundamentally opposed and that the Tantra only used Vedic forms to mask its essential opposition." I will not argue this question now. It is however the fact now as it has been for centuries past that the Āgamavadins base their doctrine on Veda. The Vedānta is the final authority and basis for the doctrines set forth in the Tantras though the latter interpret the Vedānta in various ways. The real meaning of Vedānta is Upanishad and nothing else. Many persons however speak of Vedānta as though it meant the philosophy of Shankara or whatever other philosopher they follow. This of course is incorrect. Vedānta is Shruti. Shankara's philosophy is merely one interpretation of Shruti just as Ramanuja's is another and that of the Shāivāgama or Kūlāgama is a third. There is no question of competition between Vedānta as Shruti and Tantra Shāstra. It is however the fact that each of the followers of the different schools of Āgama contend that their interpretation of the Shruti texts is the true one and superior to that of other schools. I have thus found a dislike of Shankara's Māyāvāda amongst some Sādhakas of the Northern Shāiva and Shākta schools which more nearly approach Shankara's standpoint than the Shāivasiddhānta and Pancharātra which, as is well known, dispute the truth of Shankara's interpretation of Shruti. I am not here concerned to show that one system is better than the other. Each will adopt that which most suits him. I am only stating the fact. As the Ahir-budhnya Samhitā of the Pancharātra Āgama says, the aspects of God are infinite and no philosopher can seize and duly express more than one aspect. This is perfectly true. All systems of interpretation have some merits as they have defects, that of Shankara included. The latter

by his *Māyāvāda* is able to preserve more completely than any other interpretation the changelessness and stainlessness of Brahman. It does this however at the cost of certain defects which do not exist in other schools which have also their own peculiar merits and shortcomings. The basis and seat of authority is Shruti or experience and the Āgama interprets Shruti in its own way. Thus the Shaiva-Shākta doctrine is a specific interpretation of Vedānta which differs in several respects from that of Shankara though it agrees (I speak of the Northern Shaiva School) with him on the fundamental question of the unity of Jivātmā and Paramātmā and is therefore Advaita. Āgama then is one interpretation of Vedānta; an interpretation doubtless influenced by the *practical* ends which this Shāstra has in view. From the highest standpoint all schools may be reconciled.

The next question is how Vedantic experience of which the Āgama speaks may be gained? This is also prescribed in the Shāstra in the form of peculiar Sādhanās. In the first place there must be a healthy physical and moral life. To know a thing in its ultimate sense is to *be* that thing. To know Brahman is to *be* Brahman. One cannot realise Brahman the Pure except by being oneself pure (Shuddhachitta). But to attain and keep this state, as well as for progress therein, certain specific means, practice, rituals or disciplines are necessary. The result cannot be got by mere philosophical talk about Brahman. Religion is a practical activity. Just as the body requires exercise, training and gymnastic so does the mind. This may be of a merely intellectual or spiritual kind. The means employed are called Sādhanā which comes from the root "Sādh" to exert. Sādhanā is that which leads to Siddhi. Sādhanā is the development of Shakti. Man is consciousness (Ātmā) vehicled by Shakti in the form of mind and body. But this Shakti is at base consciousness just as Ātmā is; for Ātmā and Shakti are one. Man is thus a vast magazine of both latent and expressed power. The object of Sādhanā is to develop man's Shakti whether for temporal or spiritual purposes. But where is this Sādhanā to be found? Seeing that the Vaidik Āchāra has fallen into practical desuetude we can find it nowhere but in the Āgamas and in the Purānas which are replete with Tāntrik rituals. The Tantras of these Āgamas therefore contain both a practical exposition of spiritual doctrine and the means by which the truth it teaches may be *realised*. Their authority does not depend, as Western writers and some of their Eastern followers suppose on the date when they were revealed but on the question whether Siddhi is gained thereby



cues If Siddhi is not obtained the fact that it is written "Shiva uvācha" or the like counts for nothing. The Āgama therefore is a practical exposition and application of Vedānta varying according to its different schools.

The latest tendency in modern Western philosophy is to rest upon intuition as it was formerly the tendency to glorify dialectic. Intuition has however to be led into higher and higher possibilities by means of Sādhanā. This term means work or practice which in its result is the gradual unfolding of the Spirit's vast latent magazine of power (Shakti), enjoyment and vision which everyone possesses in himself. The philosophy of the Āgama is, as a friend of mine Professor Pramatha Nath Mukhyopādhyāya very well put it, a practical philosophy, adding, that what the intellectual world wants to-day is this sort of philosophy; a philosophy which not merely *argues* but *experiments*. The form which Sādhanā takes is a secondary matter. One goal may be reached by many paths. What is the path in any particular case depends on considerations of personal capacity and temperament, race and faith. For the Hindu there is the Āgama which contains forms of discipline which his race has evolved and are therefore prima-facie suitable for him. This is not to say that these forms are unalterable. Others will adopt other forms of Sādhanā suitable to them. Thus, amongst Christians, the Catholic Church prescribes a full and powerful Sādhanā in its sacraments (Sangskāra) and worship (Pujā, Upāsana), meditation (Dhyāna), rosary (Japa) and the like. But any system to be fruitful must *experiment* to gain *experience*. The significance of the Tantra Shāstra lies in this that it claims to afford a means available to all, of whatever caste and of either sex, whereby the truths taught by Vedānta may be practically realised.

## TANTRA SHĀSTRA & VEDA.

In writing this paper I had in mind the dispute which some have raised upon the question whether the Āgamas are Vaidik or Non-Vaidik.

I do not here deal with the nature and schools of Tantra or Āgama nor with their historical origin. Something has been said on these points in the Introductions to the English translations of Pandit Shiva Chandra Vidyārṇava's *Tantratattva*. I have also myself dealt with this subject in two articles in the *Prabuddha Bhārata* ("What are the Tantras and their significance?") and *Modern Review* ("Shakti and Shākta"). I wish to avoid repetition, except so far as is absolutely necessary for the elucidation of the particular subject in hand. On the disputed question whether the Āgamas are Vaidik or Non-Vaidik I desire to point out that an answer cannot be given unless we keep apart two distinct matters *viz.*, (1) what was the origin of the Āgamas and (2) what they are now. I am not here however dealing with the first or historical question, but with the second so far as the Shākta Āgama is concerned. Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that (to take a specific example) the worship of Kālī and other Goddesses by the Shāktas indicates the existence of non-aryan elements in their Āgama; the question of real importance here, as always, is not as to what were the facts in remote past ages but what are they now. The answer then is—let it be as you will regarding the origin of the Shākta Āgama; but at present Shākta worship is an integral part of the general Hinduism and as such admits the authority of Veda, accepting, as later explained, every other belief held by the general body of the Hindu people.

In a recent prosecution under Sections 292, 293 of the Indian Penal Code against an accused who had published a Tantra (but who was rightly acquitted), an Indian Deputy Magistrate who had advised the prosecution, and who claimed to be an orthodox Hindu, stated (I am informed) in the witness box, that he could not define what the Tantra Shāstra was, or state whether it was a Hindu Scripture of the Kali age, or whether a well known particular Shāstra shown to him was one of the Tantras. Such ignorance is typical of many at the present time and in a large part of a vanishing age. How is it that a Shāstra

abode of Shiva and of Parvat Devi) to Cape Comorin (a corruption of Kumāri Devi), which ruled for centuries, so that we may speak of a Tantrik epoch; which even to-day governs the household and temple ritual of every Hindu; how is it that such a Shāstra has fallen into complete neglect and disrepute amongst the larger body of the English educated community? I remember a time when mention of the Shāstra was only made (I speak of course of the same class) with bated breath; and when any one who concerned himself therewith became thereby liable to the charge of giving licentious sway to drink and women. The answer is both a general and particular one. In the first place the English-educated people of this country were formerly almost exclusively, and later to a considerable extent, under the entire sway of their English educators. In fact they were in a sense their creation. They were, and some of them still are, the Mānasaputra of the English. For them what was English and Western was the mode. Hindu religion, philosophy and art were only, it was supposed, for the so-called "uneducated" women and peasants and for native Pandits who, though learned in their futile way, had not received the illuminating advantages of a western training. In my own time an objection was (I am informed) taken by Indian fellows of the Calcutta University to the appointment of the learned Pandit Chandrakānta Tarkalankāra to a chair of Indian philosophy on the ground that he was a mere native Pandit. In this case English Fellows and the late Vice-Chancellor opposed this absurd and snobbish objection. When the authority of the English teachers was at its highest, what they taught was law, even though their judgments were in respect of Indian subjects of which they had but a scant and imperfect knowledge. If they said with, or in anticipation of, one Professor, that the Vedas were "the babbling of a child humanity" and the Brāhmanas "the drivel of mad-men", or with another that the thought of the Upanishads was so "low" that it could not be correctly rendered in the high English language; that in "treating of Indian philosophy a writer has to deal with thoughts of a lower order than the thoughts of the every day life of Europe"; that Smṛiti was mere priestly tyranny, the Purānas idle legends and the Tantras mere wickedness and debauchery; that Hindu philosophy was (to borrow another English Professor's language concerning the Sāṅkhya) "with all its folly and fanaticism little better than a chaotic impertinence", and that Yoga was, according to the same man of learning "the fanatical vagaries of theocracy"; that Indian ritual was nothing but superstition, mummery, and idolatry, and art

inelegant, monstrous, and grotesque—all this was with readiness accepted as high learning and wisdom, with perhaps here and there an occasional faint, and even apologetic, demur. I recollect in this connection a rather halting and shamefaced protest by the late Rajendra Lala Mitra. I do not say that none of these or other adverse criticisms had any ground whatever. There has been imperfection, folly, superstition wickedness here as elsewhere. There has been much of it for example in the countries whence these critics of India came. It is however obvious that such criticisms are so excessive as to be absurd.

Raja Rammohan Roy was the first to take up the cause of his faith, divorcing it from the superstitious accretions which gather around all religions in the course of the ages. The same defence was made in recent times by that man of upstanding courage, your great Founder Svāmī Vivekānanda. Foreign criticism on Indian religion now tends in some quarters to greater comprehension. I say in some quarters; for even in quite recent years English books have been published which would be amazing, were one not aware of the deep ignorance and prejudice which exist on the subject. In one of these books the Hindu religion is described as "a mixture of nightmare nonsense and time-wasting rubbish fulfilling no useful purpose whatever: only adding to the general burden of existence borne by Humanity in its struggle for existence." In another it is said to be "a weltering chaos of terror, darkness, and uncertainty." It is a religion without the apprehension of a moral evolution, without definite commandments, without a religious sanction in the sphere of morals, without a moral code and without a God; such so-called God as there is being "a mixture of Bacchus, Don Juan and Dick Turpin." It is there further described as the most material and childishly superstitious animalism that ever masqueraded as idealism; not another path to God but a pit of abomination as far set from God as the mind of man can go; staggering the brain of a rational man; filling his mind with wild contempt for his species and which has only endured "because it has failed." Except for the purpose of fanatical polemic one would assume that the endurance of a faith is in some measure the justification of it. It is still more wonderful to learn from this work ("The Light of India," written by Mr. Harold Begbie and published by the Christian Literature Society for India) that out of this weltering chaos of all that is ignorant, is, immoral and class, superstitious come forth men who put the words of the author, "standing at Prayer shall you be" "large, handsome and free."

quail—the whole face exquisite with meekness and majestic with spirit.” One marvels how these perfect men arise from such a worthless and indeed putrescent source. This absurd picture was highly coloured in a journalistic spirit and with a purpose. In other cases faulty criticism is due to supercilious ignorance. As another writer says (the italics are mine) “For an Englishman to get a plain statement of what Brahmanism really means is far from easy. The only wonder is that people *who have to live on nine pence a week*, who marry when they are ten years old, are prevented from caste life from rising out of what is often, if not always, a degraded state, have *any religion* at all.” As the Bishop of Peterborough has recently said it is difficult for some to estimate worth in any other terms than £. s. d. It is to be hoped that all such snobbish materialism will be hindered from entrance into this country. These quotations reveal the depths of ignorance and prejudice which still exist. As we are however aware, all English criticism is not as ignorant and prejudiced as these, even though it be often marred by essential error. On the contrary there are an increasing number who appreciate and adopt, or appreciate if they cannot accept, your beliefs. Further than this, Eastern thought is having a marked influence on that of the west, though it is not often acknowledged. Many have still the notion that they have nothing in any domain to learn from this hemisphere. After all, what any one else says should not affect the independence of our own judgment. Let others say what they will. We should ourselves determine matters which concern us. The Indian people will do so when they free themselves from that hypnotic magic which makes them often place blind reliance on the authority of foreigners who, even when claiming to be scholars, are seldom free from bias, religious or racial. Such counsel, though by no means unnecessary to-day, is happily becoming less needed than in the past.

There are however still many, particularly those of my own generation, whose English Gurus and their teaching have made them captives. Their mind has been so dominated and moulded to a western manner of thinking (philosophical, religious, artistic, social and political) that they have scarcely any greater capacity to appreciate their own cultural inheritance than their teachers, be that capacity in any particular case more or less. Some of them care nothing for their Shâstra. They are, in fact, as I have said, the Mânasaputra of the English in a strict sense of the term. The Indian who has lost his Indian soul must regain it if he would retain that independence in his thought and in the ordering of his life which is the mark of a man, that is of one who seeks *Svarājya*.

siddhi How can an imitator be on the same level as his original? Rather he must sit as a Chela at the latter's feet. Whilst we can all learn something from one another; yet some in this land have yet to learn that their cultural inheritance with all its defects (and none is without such) is yet a noble one: an equal in rank, (to say the least), with those great past civilizations which have moulded the life and thought of the west. All this has been said better than I have put it by some of yourselves. Such value as my own remarks possess is due to the fact that I am not one of you and that I can see and judge from without as an outside, though (I will admit in one sense) interested observer—interested because I have at heart your welfare and that of all others which, as the world now stands, is bound up with your own.

As regards the Tantra Shâstra in particular greater ignorance prevailed and still exists. Its Vâmâchâra practice however seemed so peculiar, and its abuses were so talked of, that they captured attention to the exclusion of everything else; the more particularly that the rest of the Shâstra is hard to understand. Whilst the Shâstra provides by its Âchâras for all types from the lowest to the most advanced, its essential concepts under whatever aspect they are manifested and into whatever pattern they are woven are (as Professor de La Vallée Poussin says of the Buddhist Tantra) of a metaphysical and subtle character. Indeed it is largely because of the subtlety of its principles together with the difficulties which attend ritual exposition, that the study of the Tantras, notwithstanding the comparative simplicity of their Sanskrit, has been hitherto neglected by western scholars. Possibly it was thought that the practices mentioned rendered any study of a system, in which they occurred, unnecessary. There was and still is some ground for the adverse criticism which has been passed on it. Nevertheless it was not a just appreciation of the Shâstra as a whole, nor even an accurate judgment in respect of the particular ritual thus singled out for condemnation.

I have dealt with the subject of the Tantras in several previous papers to which I have referred you. It is only necessary here to say that "the Tantra" as it was called was wrongly considered to be synonymous with the Shâkta Tantras; that in respect of the latter the whole attention was given to the Vâmâchâra ritual and to magic (Shaktakarma); that this however may in truth be said against it, was not

repertory of the alchemy medicine law religion art and so forth of their time. It was sufficient to mention the word 'Tantra' and there was supposed to be the end of the matter.

I have often been asked why I had undertaken the study of the Tantra Shâstra and in some English (as opposed to Continental) quarters it has been suggested that my time and labour might be more worthily employed. My answer is this:—Following the track of unmeasured abuse I have always found something good. The present case is no exception. I protest and have always protested against unjust aspersions upon the civilization of India and its peoples. If there be what is blameworthy, accuracy requires that criticism should be reduced to its true proportions. Having been all my life a student of the world's religions and philosophies, I entered upon a particular study of this Shâstra to discover for myself what it taught, and whether it was, as represented, a complete *reversal* of all other Hindu teaching with which I was acquainted. For it was said to be the cultivation or practice of gluttony, lust, and malevolence ("ferocity lust, and mummery" as Brian Hodgson called it) which I knew the Indian Shâstra, like all the other religious Scriptures of the world, strictly forbid.

I found that the Shâstra was of high importance in the history of Indian religion. The Tantra Shâstra or Âgama is not, as some seem to suppose, a petty Shâstra of no account; one and an unimportant sample of the multitudinous manifestations of religion in a country which swarms with every form of religious sect. It is on the contrary with Veda, Smriti and Purâna one of the four most important Shâstras in India, governing, in various degrees and ways, the temple and household ritual of the whole of India to-day and for centuries past. Those who are so strenuously averse to it by that very fact recognise and fear its influence. From a historical point of view alone it is worthy of study as an important part of Indian culture, whatever be its intrinsic worth. History cannot be written if we exclude from it what we do not personally like. As Terence grandly said:—We are men and nothing which man has done is alien to us. There are some things in some of the Tantras and a spirit which they manifest of which their student may not personally approve. But the cause of history is not to be influenced by personal predilections. It is so influenced in fact. There are some who have found in the Shâstra an useful weapon of attack against Indian religion and its tendencies. These have not the will (even if they had the capacity to understand) to give a true presentation of its teachings. But the interests of

require both. Over and above the fact that the Shāstra is an historical fact, it possesses in some respects an intrinsic value which justifies its study. Thus it is the storehouse of Indian occultism. This occult side of the Tantras is of scientific importance, the more particularly having regard to the present revived interest in occultist study in the West. "New thought" as it is called and kindred movements are a form of Mantravidyā. Vashikaranam is hypnotism, fascination. There is spiritualism and "powers" in the Tantras and so forth. For myself, however, the philosophical and religious aspect of the Scripture is more important still. The main question for the generality of men is not Power (Siddhi). Indeed the study of occultism and its practice has its dangers; and the pursuit of these powers is considered an obstacle to the attainment of that true Siddhi which is the end of every Shāstra. A subject of greater interest and value is the remarkable presentation of Vedantic knowledge which the Shākta Tantra in particular gives (I never properly understood the Vedānta until after I had studied the Tantras) as also the ritual by which it is sought to gain realization (Aparokshajñāna). The importance of the Shākta Tantra may be summed up by the statement that it is the Sādhana Shāstra of Advaitavāda. I hope to develop this last matter in a future paper. I will only say now that the main question of the day everywhere is how to realise practically the truths of religion, whatever they be? This applies to all whether Hindu, Mohamedan or Christian. Mere philosophical speculation and talk will avail nothing beyond a clarification of intellect. But that we all know is not enough. It is not what we speculate but what we are, which counts. The fundamental question is how to realise religious teaching (Sākṣbātkāra). This is the fruit of Sādhana alone; whether the form of that Sādhana be Christian, Hindu, Mohamedan, Buddhist or what else. The one and only Sādhana-shāstra for the orthodox Hindu is the Tantra Shāstra or Āgama in its varying schools. In this fact lies its chief significance and for Hindu its practical importance. This and the Advaitavāda on which the "It and rest" is in my opinion the main reason why it is worthy of study.

The opinion which I had formed of the Shāstra has been corroborated by several to whom I had introduced the matter. I should like to quote here the last letter I had only a month ago from an Indian friend, born Sanskritist and philosopher (a combination too rare). He says "they (the Tantras) have really thrown before me a flood of new  
~~ideas and facts which I had never before known~~



world. Much of the mist and haziness has now been cleared away and I find in the Tantras not only a great and subtle philosophy but many of the missing links in the development of the different systems of Hindu philosophy which I could not discover before but which I have been seeking for, for some years past." These statements might perhaps lead some to think that the Shâstra teaches something entirely, that is in every respect, new. As regards fundamental doctrines, the Tantra Shâstra (for convenience I confine myself to the Shâkta form) does not teach anything which is not to be found in essence in the Advaita Vedânta. Therefore those who think that they will find in the Shâstra some fundamental truths concerning the world which are entirely new will be dissillusioned. This observation does not apply to the form of Vedantic presentment, methods, and details; to which doubtless my friend's letter referred. He who has truly understood Indian Shâstras as a whole will recognise, under variety of form and degree of spiritual advancement, the same substance by way of doctrine.

Whilst the Shâkta Tantra recognises, with the four Vedas, the Âgamas and Nigamas, it is now based, as are all other truly Indian Shâstras on Veda. Veda, in the sense of knowledge, is ultimately Spiritual Experience, namely the Jnâna which Brahman is, and in the one partless infinite ocean of Which the world, as a limited stress in consciousness, arises. So it is said of the Devî in the Commentary on the Trishatî :—

*Vedântamahâvâkyajanya-sâkshât-kârarûpabrahmavidyâ.*

She is Brahman in the form of immediate knowledge arising from the Vedantic Mahâvâkyâ—that is "Tat tvam asi" ("That thou art") and all kindred sayings So'ham, ("He I am") Brahmâsmi ("I am Brahman") and so forth. In other words, self knowledge is self luminous and fundamental and the basis of all other knowledge. Owing to its transcendency it is beyond both prover and proof. It is self realized (Svânubhava). But Shruti is the source from which this knowledge arises, as Shankara says, by removing (as also to some extent reason may do) false notions concerning it. It reveals by removing the superincumbent mass of human error. Again, Veda in a primary sense is the world as Idea in the Cosmic Mind of the creating Brahman and includes all forms of knowledge. Thus it is eternal arising with and as the Sangskâras at the beginning of every creation. This is the Vedânta-brahman. Veda in the secondary sense is the various partial relating to Tattva and Dharma made at different



Let us examine what the Shākta Tantra (to which allusion was made) teaches.

In the first place "Hell" recognises "Heaven", for the Shākta Tantra as I have said acknowledges the authority of Veda. All Indian Shāstras do that. If they did not, they would not be Indian Shāstra. The passages on this point are so numerous, and the point itself is so plain that I will only cite a few.

Kulārṇava Tantra says (II. 140, 141) that Kuladharmā is based on and inspired by the Truth of Veda (Tasmāt vedātmakāṅg śhāstrāṅg viddhi kaulātmakāṅg priye) In the same place Shiva cites passages from Shruti in support of His doctrine. The Prapanchasāra and other Tantras cite Vaidik Mahāvākya and Mantras; and as Mantras are a part of Veda therefore Meru Tantra says that Tantra is part of Veda (Prānatoshini 70). Niruttara Tantra calls Tantra the Fifth Veda and Kulāchāra is named the fifth Āshrama (i ś); that is it follows all others. Masyastūktamahātāntara (XIII) says that the disciple must be pure of soul (Shuddhātmā) and a knower of Veda. He who is devoid of Vaidika kriyā (Vedakriyā-vivarjita) is disqualified (Mahārudrayāmala I Khanda Ch. 15; II Khanda Ch. 2; Prānatoshini 108). Gandharva Tantra (Ch. 2 Prānatoshini 6) says that the Tāntrik Sādhaka must be a believer in Veda (Āstika), ever attached to Brahman, ever speaking of Brahman, living in Brahman and taking shelter with Brahman; which, by the way, is a curious demand to make of those, the supposed objects of whose rites is mere debauchery. The Kulārṇava says that there is no knowledge higher than that of Veda and no doctrine equal to Kaula (III. 113 Nahi vedādhikā vidyā). Here a distinction is drawn between Veda which is Vidyā and the Kaula teaching which he calls Darshana. See also Mahānirvāna Tantra I. 18, 19 II. 8—15). In Mahānirvāna Tantra (III. 72) the Mantra Ong sachchid-ekam Brahma is given and in the Prapanchasāra (Ch. XXIX) this, (what it calls) "Secret of the Vedas" is explained.

That the Shākta Tantra claims to be based on Veda admits of no doubt. In fact Kulluka Bhatta the celebrated commentator on Manu says that Shruti is of two kinds Vaidik and Tāntrik (Vaidiki tāntriki śhāstra dvividhā shrutir kirtitā

Shāstras are contrary to Shruti even though they profess to be based thereon. So a citation by Bhāskarāraya in the Commentary to V. 67 of the Lalitāsahasranāma speaks of some Tantras as "opposed to Veda" (Vedaviruddhānī). The Vāyu Samhitā says "Shaivāgama is twofold that which is based on Shruti and that which is not. The former is composed of the essence of Shruti. The other is different from, or independent of, it."

*Shaivāgamopi dvividhah, shrautok' shrautashcha sangsmritah  
Shrutisāramayah shrautah svatatant rastvitaro matah.*

So again the Bhāgavata or Pancharātra Āgama has been said to be non-vaidik. This matter has been discussed by Shankarāchāryya and Rāmānuja following Yamunāchāryya.

We must in all cases distinguish between what a school says of itself and what others say of it. In Christianity both Catholicism and Protestantism claim to be based on the Bible and each alleges that the other is a wrong interpretation of it. Each again of the numerous Protestant sects says the same thing of the others.

But is Shākta Tantra contrary to Veda in fact? Let us shortly survey the main points in its doctrine. It teaches that Paramātmā Nirguna Shiva is Sachchhidānanda (Prapanhasāra Ch. XXIX : Kulārṇava Ch. I vv. 6-7). Kulārṇava says "Shiva is the impartite Supreme Brahman, the all knowing (Sarvajña) Creator of all. He is the Stainless One and the Lord of all. He is one without a second (Advaya). He is Light itself. He changes not, and is without beginning or end. He is attributeless and above the highest. He is Sachchhidānanda" (I. 6-7. And see the Dhyāna and Pancharatnastotra in Mahānirvāna Tantra III. 50, 59-63). Brahman is Sachchhidānanda, eternal (Nitya) changeless (Nirvikāra) partless (Nishkala) untouched by Maya (Nirmala), attributeless, (Nirguna) formless (Arūpa), imperishable (Akshara), all spreading like space (Vyomasannibha), self-illuminating (Svayangjyotiḥ) Reality (Tattva), which is beyond mind and speech and is to be approached through spiritual feeling alone. (Bhāvanā-gāmya) (Kulārṇava I. 6-8 ; III. 92, 93 ; IX. 7). Mahānirvāna (III. 50, 59-63, 67-68, 74 III. 12). In His aspect as the Lord (īshvara) of all, He is the all-Knower (Sarvajña) Lord of all : whose Body is pure Sattva (Shudhasattvamaya), the Soul of the universe (Vishvātmā) (Mahānirvāna I. 61. III. 68). Such definitions simply re-affirm the teaching of Veda Brahman is That which pervades without limit the

universe (Prapanchasâra XXIX Mahânirvâna III. 33-35) as oil the sesame seed (Shâradâ Tilaka I. Shâktânandatarangini I. Prânatoshini 13). This Brahman has twofold aspect as Parabrahma (Nirguna, Nishkala) and Shabdabrahman (Saguna, Sakala). So the Kulârnavâ says Shabdabrahmaparambrahmabhedena Brahmano dvaividhyam uktam. (Khanda V. Ullâsa 1). The same Tantra says that Sadâshiva is without the bonds (of Mâyâ) and Jîva is with them (Pâshabaddho bhavejjîvah pâshamuktah sadâshivah IX 42) upon which the author of the Prânatoshini citing this passage says "thus the identity of Jîva and Shiva is shown (iti Shivajîvayoraikyam uktam). The Shâkta Tantra is thus Advaitavâda: for it proclaims that Paramâtmâ and Jivâtmâ are one. So it affirms the "grand words" (Mahâvâkya) of Veda—Tat tvam asi, So'ham, Brahmâsmi (Mahânirvâna VIII. 264-265, V. 105. Prapanchasâra II; identifying Hring with Kundali and Hangsah and then with So'ham. Yah Sûkshmah So'ham (ib. XXIV, Jnânârnavâ Tantra XXI. 10. As to Brahmâsmi, see Kulârnavâ IX. 32 and ib. 41 So'ham-bhâvena pûjayet). The Mantra "all this is surely Brahman (Sarvam khalvidam Brahma) is according to the Mahânirvâna (VII. 98) the end and aim of Tântrika Kulâchâra, the realization of which saying the Prapanchasâra Tantra describes as the fifth or Supreme State (Ch. XIX); for the identity of Jivâtmâ and Paramâtmâ is Liberation which the Vedântasâra defines to be Jivabrâhmanoraikyam). Kulârnavâ refers to the Advaita of which Shiva speaks (Advaitantu shivenoktam I. 108. See also Mahânirvâna II. 33-34, III. 33-35; 50-64; Prapanchasâra II, XIX, XXIX). Gandharva Tantra says that the Sâdhaka must be a nondualist (Dvaitahîna). See Ch. II. ib. Prânatoshini 108 Mahârudrayâmala I Khanda Ch. 15; II Khanda Ch. 2). It is useless to multiply quotations on this point of which there is no end. In fact that particular form of worship which has earned the Shâkta Tantras ill-fame claims to be a practical application of Advaitavâda. The Sammohana Tantra (Ch. VIII) gives high praise to the philosopher Shangkarâchâryya saying that He was an incarnation of Shiva for the destruction of Buddhism. Kaulâchâryya is said to properly follow a full knowledge of Vedântik doctrine. Shiva in the Kulârnavâ (I. 110) says "some desire Dvaita, others Advaita but my truth is beyond both (Da tadvantavivarjita The Jnâni is beyond all philosophical argument

grief. I am a form of Sachchidānanda whose true nature is eternal liberation."

*Ahang Devī na chāny'osmi, brahmaivāhang na shokabhāk,  
Sachchidānandarūpo 'hang nityamuktasvabhāvavān.*

At noon again seated in Pājāsana at time of Bhātashuddhi he meditates on the dissolution of the Tattvas in Paramātmā. Seeing no difference between Paramātmā and Jivātmā he affirms Sāham "I am She." Again in the evening after ritual duties he affirms himself to be the Akhilātmā and Sachchidānanda, and having so thought he sleeps. Similarly (I may here interpose) in the Buddhist Tantra—the Sādhaka on rising in the state of Devadeha (hLayi-sku) imagines that the double drums are sounding in the heavens proclaiming the mantras of the 24 Virās (dPahvo), and regards all things around him as constituting the Mandala of himself as Buddha Vajrasattva. When about to sleep he again imagines his body to be that of Buddha Vajrasattva and then merges himself into the tranquil state of the void (Shūnyatā).

Gandharva Tantra says "having saluted the lines of Gurus as directed and thought 'So'ham' the wise Sādhaka should ponder the unity of Jiva and Brahman."

*Gurūn natvā vichānena soham iti pūrogatah  
Aikyam sambhāvayet dhīmān jīvasya Brahmano 'pi cha.*

Kālī Tantra says "Having meditated in this way, a Sādhaka should worship Devī as his own Ātmā thinking I am Brahman." Kubjikā Tantra says (Devī is called Kubjikā because She Kundalī) "A Sādhaka should meditate on his own self as one and the same with Her (Tayā sahita-mātmānam ekibhūtaṁ vichintayet): and so on; for I might quote indefinitely from a Shāstra the basis of which is the Advaitavedānta.

The cardinal doctrine of these Shākta Tantras is that of Shakti whether in its Svarūpa as Chidrūpīnī, the Parāprākṛitī of Paramātmā (Mahānirvāna IV, 10) or as Māyā and Prakṛitī (see as to the latter the great Hymn to Prakṛitī in Prapanchasāra Ch. XI). Shakti as the Kubjikā Tantra says (Ch. 1) is Consciousness (Chaitanyarūpīnī) and Bliss (Ānandarūpīnī). She is at the same time support of (Guṇashrayī) and composed of the Guṇas (Guṇamayī) Māyā is however explained from the standpoint of Sādhana, the Tantra Shāstra being a Sādhana

Shâstra, and not according to the Mâyāvâda, that is transcendental standpoint, of Shankara.

What is there in the great Devi Sûkta of the Rigveda (Mandala X Sûkta 125) which the Shâkta Tantra does not teach? The Rishi of this revelation was a woman the daughter of Rishi Ambhrina. It was fitting that a woman should proclaim the Divine Motherhood. Her Hymn says "I am the Sovereign Queen the Treasury of all treasures; the chief of all objects of worship whose all-pervading Self all Devatâs manifest; whose birthplace is in the midst of the causal waters: who breathing forth gives form to all created worlds and yet extends beyond them, so vast am I in greatness."

It is useless to cite quotations to show that the Shâkta Tantra accepts the doctrine of Karma which as the Kulârnavâ (IX. 125) says Jîva cannot give up until he renounces the fruit of it; an infinite number of universes, and their transitoriness (Mahânirvâna III. 7, the plurality of worlds, Heaven and Hell, the seven Lokas, the Devas and Devis, who as the Kulachudâmani (following the Devîsûkta) says (Ch. 1) are but parts of the great Shakti (Shâktânandataranginî III); the state of liberation and so forth. Being Advaitavâda, Moksha is the state of Paramâtmâ. It accepts Smṛiti and Purânas; the Mahânirvâna and other Tantras saying that they are the governing Shâstras of the Tretâ and Dvâpara ages respectively, as Tantra is that of the Kaliyuga. So the Târâpradîpa (Ch. 1) says that in the Kaliyuga the Tântrika and not the Vaidika Dharma is to be followed. It is said that in Satya, Veda was undivided. In Dvâpara, Krishna-dvaipâyana separated it into four parts. In Satya, Vaidika Upâsanâ was Pradhâna, Sâdhakas worshipping Indra for wealth, children and the like; though Nishkâma Rishis adored the Sarvashaktimân (Devîsûkta is Advaitasiddhipûrna). In Tretâ, worship according to Smṛiti prevailed. It was then that Vashishtha is said to have done Sâdhanâ of Brahmadevyâ according to Chinâchâra Krama. Though in the Dvâpara there was Smṛiti and Purâna, rites were generally performed according to the Purânas. There was also then, as always, worshippers of the Pârnashaktimahâvidyâ. At the end of Dvâpara and beginning of the Kali age the Tantra Shâstra was taught to men. Then the ten Sangskâras, Shrâddha and Anteshtikriyâ were, as they are now, performed according to the Vaidikadharma: Âshramâchâra according to Dâyaabhâga and other Smṛiti Texts - Vratas according to Purâna; Dîkshâ and Upâsanâ of Brahman with Shakti, and various kinds of Yajnas, Sâdhanâ according to the four Yugas, and the four Vedas.

parts Tantra (Sattvaguna) Yāmala (Rajoguna) and Dāmara (Tamo guna). There were 64 Tantras for each of the three divisions Ashva krānta, Rathakrānta, Vishnukrānta.

Such is a Tāntrik tradition concerning the Ages and their appropriate scriptures. Whether this tradition has any historical basis still awaits inquiry, which is rendered difficult by the fact that many Tantras have been lost and others destroyed by those inimical to them. It is sufficient for my purpose to merely state what is the belief ; that purpose being to shew that the Tantra Shāstra recognises and claims not to be in conflict, with Veda or any other recognised Shāstra. It accepts the six Philosophies (Darshana) which Shiva says are the six limbs of Kula and parts of His body, saying that he who severs them severs His limbs (Kulārṇava II, 84, 84-95). The meaning of this is the six Philosophies and the six Minds as all else are parts of His body. It accepts the Shabda doctrine of Mīmāṃsā subject to certain modifications to meet its doctrine or Shakti. Though it, in common with the Shaiva Tantra, accepts the doctrine of the 36 Tattvas, Kalās and Shadadhvā (Tattva, Kalā, Bhuvana, Varna, Pada, Mantra), this is only an elaboration of detail which explains the origin of the Purusha and Prakriti Tattvas of the Sāṅkhya. These are shown to be twin facets of the One and the "development" of Shakti into Purusha-Prakriti Tattva is shown. These Tattvas include the ordinary 24 from Prakriti with its Gunas to Prithivī. It accepts the doctrine of the three bodies (causal, subtle, gross) and the three states (Jāgrat, Svapna, Sushupti) in their individual and collective aspects. It follows the mode of evolution (Parināma) of Sāṅkhya in so far as the development of Jiva is concerned as also an Ābhāsa, in the nature of Vivartta, "from Fire to Fire" in the Pure Creation. Its exposition of the body includes the five Prāṇas, the seven Dhātus, the Doṣhas (Vāyu, Pitta, Kapha) (Prapanchasāra II) and so forth. On the ritual side it contains the commonly accepted ritual of present day Hinduism ; Mantra, Yantra, Pratimā, Lingga, Shālagrāma, Nyāsa, Japa, Pājā, Stotra, Kavacha, Dhyāna and so forth, as well as the Vaidik rites which are the ten Saṅskāras, Homa and the like. Most of the commonly accepted ritual of the day is Tāntrik. It accepts Yoga in all its forms Mantra, Hatha, Laya, Jñāna ; and is in particular distinguished by its practice of Laya or Kundali yoga and other Hatha processes.

Therefore not only is the authority of the Veda acknowledged along with the Āgama, Nigamas and Tantras but there is not a single



doctrine or practice amongst those hitherto mentioned which is either not generally held, or which has not the adherence of large numbers of Indian worshippers. It accepts all the notions common to Hinduism as a whole. Nor is there a single doctrine previously mentioned which is contrary to Veda, that is on the assumption of the truth of Advaitavāda. For of course it is open to Dualists and Vishishtādvaitins to say that its Monistic interpretation of Vedānta is not a true exposition of Vaidik truth. No Shākta will however say that. Subject to this, I do not know of anything which it omits and should have included, or states contrary to the tenor of Vaidik doctrine. If there be anything I shall be obliged as a student of the Shāstra to any one who will call my attention to it. The Shāstra has not therefore up to this point shown itself as a "Hell" in opposition to the Vaidik "Heaven."

But it may be said that I have omitted the main thing which gives it its bad and unvaidik character namely the ill-famed Panchatattva or worship with meat, wine, fish, grain and woman. I have also omitted the magic to be found in some of the Shāstras.

The latter may be first shortly dealt with. Magic is not peculiar to the Tantras. It is to be found in plenty in the Atharvaveda. In fact the definition of Abhichāra is "the Karma described in the Tantras and Atharvaveda." There is nothing anti-vaidik then in Magic. I may however here also point out that there is nothing wrong in Magic (Shatkarma) *per se*. As with so many other things it is the use or abuse of it which makes it right or wrong. If a man kills by Māranam Karma a rival in his business, to get rid of competition and to succeed to his clients custom, he commits a very grave sin—one of the most grievous of sins. Suppose however that a man saw a tiger stalking a child, or a dacoit about to slay it for its golden ornament; his killing of the tiger or dacoit would, if necessary for the safety of the child, be a justifiable act. Magic is however likely to be abused and has in fact been abused by some of the Tantriks. I think this is the most serious charge established against them. For evil magic which proceeds from malevolence is a greater crime than any abuse of natural appetite. But in this as in other matters, we must distinguish between what the Shāstra says and the practices of its followers. The injunction laid upon the Sādhaka is that he should do good to other beings as if they were his own self." *Ātmavat sarvāṇi śītibhyo hitvā kuryāt kuleśvaram*

far inferior work to the Tantra of that name) She receives some horrible rites with the flesh of rat and bat, with the soiled linen of a Chandāl woman, with the shroud of a corpse, and so forth; and then he says, "My heart trembles (hridayam kampate mama) my limbs tremble (gātrāni mama kampante) my mouth is dry oh Pārvati (mukham shushyate Pārvati!) Oh gentle one my mind is all disturbed (kshobho me jāyate bhadre). What more shall I say? Conceal it (Na vaktavyam) conceal it, conceal it. He then says:—"In the Kali age Sādhakas are generally greedy of money. Having done greatly sinful acts they destroy living beings. For them there is neither Guru nor Rudra nor Thee nor Sādhikā. My dear life they are ready to do acts for the destruction of men. Therefore it is wrong to reveal these matters oh Devi. I have told Thee out of affection for Thee, being greatly pleased by Thy kisses and embrace. But it should be as carefully concealed by Thee as your own secret body. Oh Pārvati all this is great sinful and a very bad Yoga. (Mahāpātakayuktang tat kuyogo 'yamudāhritah)."

*Kalikāle sādhakāstu prāyasho dhanalolupāh  
Mahākṛityāṅg vidhāyaiva prāṇināṅ badhabhāginah  
Na gurur nāpi Rudro vā naiva tvang naiva sādhiikā  
Mahāprāṇivināśhāya samarthah prāṇavallabhe  
Etat prakāshanang devi dośhāya parikalpyate  
Sneheṇa tava deveshi chumbanāṅlinganaistathā  
Santushyaiva mayē devi sarvaṁ etat prakāshitam  
Tvayā gōpyang prayatnena svayoniriva Pārvati  
Mahāpātaka-yuktang tat kuyogo 'yamudāhritah*

"None of these things are ever to be done by Thee Oh Daughter of the Mountain (Sarvathā naiva kartavyang tvayā Pārvatanandini) Whoever does so, incurs the sin of destroying Me. I destroy all such as does fire dry grass. Of a surety such incur the sin of slaying a Brāhmana. All such incur the sin of slaying a Brāhmana."

*Sarvathā naiva kartavyas tvayā Pārvatanandini  
Badhabhāh mama deveshi kṛityamimāṅg samācharet  
Tasya sarvaṁ harā nyāshui vaśniḥ shushkātrinang yathā  
Avyarthang Brahmakatyā icha Brahmakatyāṅg sa vindati*

do so is to be both fair and accurate. There is nothing in any event in the point that the magical contents of the Tantra Shâstra make it contrary to Veda. Those who bring such a charge must also prefer it against the Atharvaveda. As a matter of fact magic is common to all early religions. It has been practiced, though condemned, in Christian Europe. It is not necessary to go back to the old witchcraft trials. There are some who protest against its recrudescence to-day.

The second charge is the alleged anti-vaidik character of the Panchatattva sâdhanâ, its alleged immorality of principle and the evil lives of those who practise it. I am not in the present paper dealing in full with this subject; not that I intend by any means to shirk it; but it is more appropriately the subject of consideration in a future paper which I will read on the subject of Shâkta Tântrik Sâdhanâ of which it forms a part. What I wish to say now is only this:—We must distinguish in the first place between a principle and its application. A principle may be perfectly right and sound and yet a supposed application may not be an application in fact; or if there be an application, the latter may violate some other moral or physical law, or be dangerous and inexpedient as leading to abuse. I will on another day show that the principle involved is one which is claimed to be in conformity with Vaidik truth, and is in fact recognised in varying forms by all classes of Hindus. Some do so dualistically. The Sâdhanâ of the Shâkta Tantra is, whether right or wrong, an application of the principles of Advaitavâda and in its full form should not, it is said, be entered upon until after Vedântic principles have been mastered. For this reason Kauladharmâ has been called the fifth Âshrama. Secondly I wish to point out that this ritual with wine and meat is not as some suppose a new thing; something introduced by the Shâkta Tântriks. On the contrary it is very old and has sanction in Vaidik practice. So much is this so, that a Tântrik Sâdhu discussing the matter with a Bengali friend of mine said of himself, as a follower of this ritual, that he was a Hindu and that those who were opposed to it were Jainas. What he meant, and what seems to be the fact, is that the present day general prohibition against the use of wine, and the generally prevalent avoidance, or limitation, of an animal diet are due to the influence of Jainism and Buddhism which arose after and in opposition to Vaidik usage. Their influence is most marked of course in Vaishnavism but has not been without effect elsewhere. When we examine ancient Vaidik usage we find that meat, fish and Mûdrâ (the latter in the form of Purodâsha) were consumed, and in

toxicating liquor (in the form of Soma) was drunk in the Vaidik Yajnas. We also discover some Vaidik rites in which there was Maithuna. This I have dealt with in my article on "Shakti and Shākta."

The abovementioned facts show in my opinion that there is ground for the doctrine of the Tāntrikas that it is Avidyā to sever Veda and Tantra. My conclusion is not however a counsel to follow this nor any other particular form of ritual. I am only concerned to state the facts. I may however here add two observations.

From an outside point of view (for I do not here deal with the subject otherwise) we must consider the age in which a particular Shāstra was produced and consequently the conditions of the time, the then state of society, its moral and spiritual development and so forth. To understand some rites in the past history of this and other countries one must seek in lieu of surface explanations their occult significance in the history of the human race; and the mind must cast itself back into the ages whence it has emerged, by the aid of those traces which it still bears in the depths of its being of that which outwardly expressed itself in ancient custom.

Take for instance the rite of human sacrifice which the Kālikalpatalā says that the Rāja alone may perform (Rājā naravaling dadyān-nānyo 'pi parameshvari) but in which, as the Tantrasāra states, no Brāhmana may participate (Brāhmanānāṅg naravaliḍāne nādhikārah). Such and animal sacrifice is not peculiarly "Tāntrik" but an instance of the survival of a rite widely spread in the ancient world; older than the day when Jehovah bade Abraham sacrifice his son (Gen XXII) and that on which Sunahsepa (Aitareya Brāhmana VII, 13) like Isaac was released. Reference it is true is made to this sacrifice in the Shāstras but save as some rare exception (I had a case in Court some years ago) it does not exist to-day and the vast mass of men do not wish to see it revived. The Chakra ritual similarly is either disappearing or becoming in spirit transformed.

What is of primary value in the Tantra Shāstra are certain principles with which I have dealt elsewhere, and with which I deal again in part in this and the following lectures. The application of these principles in ritual is a question of form. All form is a passing thing. In the shape of ritual its validity is limited to place and time. As so

and it will continue so long as it serves an useful purpose and meets needs of the age and the degree of its spiritual advancement or of any particular body of men who practice it ; otherwise it will wear, whilst the foundations of Vedānta on which it rests may remain. In the same way it is said we ourselves come and go with merits and demerits but the Spirit ever abides beyond both good and evil.

## SHAKTI AND SHĀKTA.

Shakti who is in Herself pure blissful Consciousness (Chidrūpini) is also the Mother of Nature born of the creative play of Her thought. The Shākta faith or worship of Shakti is, I believe, in some of its essential features one of the oldest and most widespread religions in the world. Though very ancient, it is yet, in its essentials and in the developed form in which we know it to-day, harmonious with some of the teachings of modern philosophy and science; not that this is necessarily a test of its truth. It may be here noted that in the West and in particular in America and England a large number of books are now being published on "New Thought", "Will Power", "Vitalism", "Creative Thought", "Right Thought", "Self Unfoldment", "Secret of Achievement", "Mental Therapeutics" and the like, the principles of which are essentially those of some forms of Shakti Sādhana both higher and lower. There are books of disguised magic as how to control others (Vashikaranam) by making them buy what they do not want, how to secure "affection" and so forth which, notwithstanding some hypocrisies, are in certain respects on the same level as the Tāntrik Shavara. The ancient and at the same time distinguishing character of the faith is instanced by temple worship (the old Vaidik worship was generally in the home or in the open by the river), the cult of images, of Linga and Yoni (neither of which it is said were part of the original Vaidik practice), the worship of Devīs and of the Magna Mater (the great Vaidik Devatā was the male Indra) and other matters of both doctrine and practice.

Many years ago Edward Sellon with the aid of a learned Orientalist of the Madras Civil Service attempted to learn its mysteries, but for reasons, which I need not here discuss, did not view them from the right standpoint. He however compared the Shāktas with the Greek Telestika or Dynamica, the Mysteries of Dionysus "Fire born in the cave of initiation" with the Shakti Pūjā, the Shakti Shodhana with the purification shown in d' Hancarville's "Antique Greek Vases"; and after referring to the frequent mention of this ritual in the writings of the Jews and other ancient authors concluded that it was evident that we had still surviving in India in the Shākta worship a very ancient, if not the most ancient, form of Mysticism in the whole world. Whatever be the value to be given to any particular piece of evidence he was right in his

general conclusion For when we throw our minds back upon the history of this worship we see stretching away into the remote and fading past the figure of the Mighty Mother of Nature, most ancient among the ancients ; the Âdyâ Shakti, the dusk Divinity, many-breasted crowned with towers whose veil is never lifted, Isis, Kâlî, Hathor, Cybele, the Cowmother Goddess Ida, Tripurasundarî, the Ionic Mother, Tef the spouse of Shu by whom He effects the birth of all things, Aphrodite, Astarte in whose groves the Baalim were set, Babylonian Mylitta, Buddhist Târâ, the Mexican Ish, Hellenic Osia the consecrated the free and pure, African Salambo who like Pârvatî roamed the Mountains, Roman Juno, Egyptian Bast the flaming Mistress of Life, of Thought, of Love, whose festival was celebrated with wanton joy, the Assyrian Mother Succoth Benoth, Northern Freia, Mûlaprakriti, Semele, Mâyâ, Ishtar, Saitic Neith Mother of the Gods, eternal deepest ground of all things, Kundalî, Guhyamahâbhairavî and all the rest.

And yet there are people who allege that the "Tântrik" cult is modern. To deny this is not to say that there has been or will be no change or development in it. As man changes so do the forms of his beliefs. An ancient feature of this faith and one belonging to the ancient Mysteries is the distinction which it draws between the initiate whose Shakti is awake (Prabuddha) and the Pashu the unilluminated or "animal" and, as the Gnostics called him, "material" man. The Natural which is the manifestation of the Mother of Nature and the Spiritual or the Mother as She is in and by Herself are one, but the initiate alone truly recognises this unity. He knows himself in all his natural functions as the one Consciousness whether in enjoyment (Bhukti,) or Liberation (Mukti). It is an essential principle of Tântrik Sâdhanâ that man in general must rise through and by means of Nature, and not by an ascetic rejection of Her. A profoundly true principle is here involved whatever has been said of certain applications of it. When Orpheus transformed the old Bacchic cult it was the purified who in the beautiful words of Euripides "went dancing over the hills with the daughters of Iacchos." I cannot however go into this matter in this lecture which is concerned with some general subjects and the ordinary ritual. But the evidence is not limited to mysteries of the Shakti Pâjâ. There are features in the ordinary outer worship which are very old and widespread, as are also other parts of the esoteric teaching. In this connection a curious instance of the existence beyond India of Tantrik doctrine and practice is here given. The American Indian Mâyâ Scripture of the Zunis called the Popul Vuh speaks of Hurakan or

lightning that is Kundalīśhakti ; of the "air tube" or "White-cord" or the Sushumnā Nādi ; of the "two-fold air tube" that is Idā and Pingalā and of various bodily centres which are marked by animal glyphs.

Perhaps the Panchatattva Ritual followed by some of the adherents of the Tantras is one of the main causes which have operated in some quarters against acceptance of the authority of these Scriptures and as such responsible for the notion that the worship is modern. On the contrary the usage of wine, meat, and so forth is itself very old. There are people who talk of these rites as though they were some entirely new and comparatively modern invention of the "Tantra" wholly alien to the spirit and practice of the early times. If the subject be studied it will, I think, be found that in this matter those worshippers who practice these rites are the continuators of very ancient practices which had their counterparts in the earlier Vaidikāchāra, but were subsequently abandoned possibly under the influence of Jainism and Buddhism. I say "counterpart" for I do not mean to suggest that in every respect the rites were the same. In details and as regards, I think, some objects in view they differed. Thus we find in this Panchatattva Ritual a counterpart to the Vaidik usage of wine and animal food. So in the Vaidik ritual as regards wine we have the partaking of Soma ; meat was offered in Māngsāshtaka Shrāddha ; fish in the Ashtakāshrāddha and Preta-shrāddha ; and Maithuna as a recognised rite will be found in the Vāmadevyā Vrata and Mahāvratā of universally recognised Vaidik texts apart from the alleged Saubhāgyakhanda of the Atharvaveda to which the Kālikopaniṣad and other Tantrik Upaniṣads are said to belong. So again, as that distinguished scholar Professor Ramendra Sundara Trivedi has pointed out in his Vichitrāprasanga, the Mudrā of the Panchatattva corresponds with the Purodāsha cake of the Soma and other Yāgas. The present rule of abstinence from wine and in some cases meat is due, I believe, to the original Buddhism. It is so-called "Tāntriks," who follow (in and for their ritual only) the earlier practice. It is true that the Samhitā of Ushanāh says "Wine is not to be drunk, given or taken (Mādyamapeyam adeyam agrāhyam)" but the yet greater Manu states, "There is no wrong in the eating of meat or the drinking of wine (na māngsabakshane dosho na madye) though he adds, as many now do, that abstention therefrom is productive of great fruit (savitṛiṣṭa mahāphalā). The Tantrik practice does not allow extra-ritual or "useless drinking (vrithāpāna)



may be comparatively recent whilst that of which they speak may be most ancient. When I speak of the ancient past of this faith I am not referring merely to the *writings* which exist to-day which are called Tantras. These are composed generally in a simple Sanskrit by men whose object it was to be understood rather than to show skill in literary ornament. This simplicity is a sign of age. But at the same time it is Laukika and not Arsha Sanskrit. Moreover there are statements in them which (unless interpolations) fix the limits of their age. I am not speaking of the writing themselves but of what they say. The faith that they embody or at least its earlier forms may have existed for many ages before it was reduced to writing amongst the Kulas or family folk who received it as handed down by tradition (Pâramparyya) just as did the Vaidik Gotras. That such beliefs and practices like all other things have had their development in course of time is also a likely hypothesis.

A vast number of Tantras have disappeared probably for ever. Of those which survive a large number are unknown. Most of those which are available are of a fragmentary character. Even if these did appear later than some other Shâstras, this would not, on Indian principles affect their authority. According to such principles the authority of a Scripture is not determined by its date; and this is sense. Why, it is asked, should something said 1000 years ago be on that account only truer than what was said 100 years ago? It is held that whilst the teaching of the Âgama is ever existent, particular Tantras are constantly being revealed and withdrawn. There is no objection against a Tantra merely because it was revealed to-day. When it is said that Shiva spoke the Tantras or Brahmâ wrote the celebrated Vaishnava poem called the Brahmasamhitâ it is not meant that Shiva and Brahmâ materialised and took a reed and wrote on birch bark or leaf but that the Divine Consciousness to which men gave these and other names inspired a particular man to teach or to write a particular doctrine or work touching the eternally existing truth. This again does not mean that there was any one whispering in his ear but that these things arose in his consciousness. What is done in this world is done through man. There is a profounder wisdom than is generally acknowledged in the saying "God helps those who help themselves." Inspiration too never ceases. But how, it may be asked, are we to know thee what is said is right and true? The answer is "by its fruits." The authority of a Shâstra is determined by the question whether Siddhi is gained through its provisions or not. It is

not enough that Shiva uvācha is writ in it. The test is that of Aynveda. A medicine is a true one if it cures. The Indian test for everything is experience. It is from Samādhi that the ultimate proof of Advaitavāda is sought. How is the existence of Kalpas known? It is said they have been remembered as by the Buddha who is recorded as having called to mind 91 past Kalpas. There are arguments in favour of rebirth but that which is tendered as real proof is both the facts of ordinary daily experience which can, it is said, be explained only on the hypothesis of pre-existence; as also actual recollection by self-developed individuals of their previous lives. Age however is not wholly without its uses: because one of the things to which men look to see in a Shāstra is whether it has been accepted or quoted in works of recognised authority. Such a test of authenticity can of course only be afforded after the lapse of considerable time. But it does not follow that a statement is in fact without value because owing to its having been made recently it is not possible to subject it to such a test. This is the way in which this question of age and authority is looked at on Indian principles.

A wide survey of what is called orthodox "Hinduism" *to-day* (whatever be its origins) will disclose the following results:—Vedānta in the sense of Upanishad as its *common doctrinal basis* though variously interpreted, and a great number of differing disciplines or *modes of practice* by which the Vedānta doctrines are realised in actual fact. We must carefully distinguish these two. Thus the Vedānta says "So'ham"; which is the Tantrik Haṅgṣa. "Hakāra is one wing, Sakāra is the other. When stripped of both wings She Tārā is Kāmakalā." The Āchāras set forth the means by which "So'ham" is to be translated into actual fact for the particular Sādhaka. Sādhana comes from the root "Sādh" which means effort or striving or accomplishment. Effort for and towards what? The answer is liberation from every form in the hierarchy of forms which exist as such because consciousness has so limited itself as to obscure the Reality which it is and which "So'ham" or "Shivo'ham" affirm. And why should man liberate himself from material forms? Because it is said, that way only lasting happiness lies: though a passing yet fruitful bliss may be had here by those who identify themselves with the Active Brahman (Shakti). It is the actual experience of this declaration of "So'ham" which in its fundamental aspect is Veda:—knowledge (Vid) or actual ~~Spiritual Experience~~, for in the monistic sense to truly know anything ~~is to be that thing~~. This Veda or experience is not to be had by sitting

down thinking vaguely on the Great Ether and doing nothing. Man must transform himself, that is, act in order to know. Therefore the watch-word of the Tantras is Kriyâ or action.

The next question is what Kriyâ should be adopted towards this end of Jnâna. "Tanyate, vistâryate jnânam anena iti Tantram." According to this derivation of the word Tantra from the root "Tan" "to spread" it is defined as the Shâstra by which knowledge (Jnâna) is spread. Mark the word Jnâna. The end of the practical methods which these Shâstras employ is to spread Vedantic Jnâna. It is here we find that variety which is so puzzling to those who have not gone to the root of the religious life of India. The *end* is substantially one. The *means* to that end necessarily vary according to knowledge, capacity, and temperament. But here again we may analyse the means into two main divisions, namely, Vaidik and Tantrik, to which may be added a third or the mixed (Mishra). The one body of Hinduism reveals as it were a double frame work represented by the Vaidik and Tantrik Âchâras which have in certain instances been mingled.

The word "Tantra" by itself simply means "treatise" and not necessarily a religious scripture. When it has the latter significance it may mean the scripture of several divisions of worshippers who vary in doctrine and practice. Thus there are Tantras of Shaivas, Vaishnavas, and Shâktas and of various subdivisions of these. So amongst the Shaivas there are the Shaivas of the Shaiva Siddhânta, the Advaita Shaiva of the Kashmir School, Pâshupatas and a multitude of other sects which have their Tantras. If "Tantrik" be used as meaning an adherent of the Tantra Shâstra, then the word in any particular case is without definite meaning. A man to whom the application is given may be a worshipper of any of the Five Devatâs and of any of the various Sampradâyas worshipping that Devatâ with their varying doctrine and practice. The term is a confusing one though common practice compels its use. So far as I know those who are named "Tantriks" do not themselves generally use this term but call themselves Shâktas, Shaivas and the like, of whatever Sampradâya they happen to be.

Again Tantra is the name of only one class of Scripture followed by "Tantriks." There are others, namely, Nigamas, Âgamas, Yâmalâs Dâmaras, Uddishas, Kakshaputas and so forth. None of these names are used to describe the adherents of these Shâstras except so far as I am aware Âgama in the use of the term Âgamavâdin, and Âgamânta

in the descriptive name of Agamânta Shaiva I give later a list of these Scriptures as contained in the va o is Agamas. If we summarise them shortly under the term Pa t a Shâstra, or preferably Agama then we have four main classes of Indian Scripture, namely, Veda (Sambhitâ, Brâhmana, Upanishad), Âgama or Tantra Shâstra Purâna, Smriti. Of these Shâstras the authority of the Âgama or Tantra Shashtra has been denied in modern times. This view may be shown to be erroneous by reference to Shâstras of admitted authority. It is spoken of as the Fifth Veda. Kulluka Bhatta the celebrated commentator on Manu says: "Shruti is twofold, Vaidik and Tantrik" (Vaidika tântrikâ chaiva dvidvidha shrutih kirtita). This refers to the Mantra portion of the Âgamas. In the Great Vaishnava Shâstra the Shrimad Bhâgavata, Bhagavân says: 'My worship of the three kinds—Vaidik, Tantrik and Mixed (Mishra) and that in Kaliyuga Keshava is to be worshipped according to the injunction of Tantra.' The Devibhâgavata speaks of the Tantra Shâstra as a Vedânga. It is cited as authority in the Ashtavingshati Tattva of Raghunandana who prescribe for the worship of Durgâ as before him had done Shridatta, Harinâtha, Vidyâdhara and many others. Some of these and other references are given in Mahâmahopâdhyaya Jadaveshvara Tarkaratna's Tantrer Prâchinatva in the Sâhitya Samhitâ of Aswin 1317. The Târâpradipa and other Tantrik works say that in the Kaliyuga the Tântrika and not the Vaidika Dharma is to be followed. This objection about the late character and therefore unauthoritativeness of the Tantra Shâstras generally (I do not speak of any particular form of it) has been taken by Indians from their European Gurus.

According to the Shâkta Scriptures Veda in its wide sense does not only mean Rig, Yajus, Sama, Atharva as now published but comprises these together with the generally unknown and unpublished Uttara Kânda of the Atharva Veda called Saubhâgya with the Upanishads attached to this. Sâyana's Commentary is written on the Pârva Kânda. These are said (though I have not yet verified the fact) to be 64 in number. Some of these, such as Advaitabhâva, Kaula, Kâlikâ, Upanishads and others, I am shortly publishing as also the Kaulâchâryya Sadânanda's Commentary on the great Îsha Upanishad. Included also in "Veda" (according to the same view) are the Nigamas, Agamas, Yâmalas and Tantras. From these all other Shâstras which explain the Artha of Veda such as Purâna and Smriti, also Itihâsa and so forth are derived. All these Shâstras constitute what is called a ~~"many millions"~~ (Shatakoti) Samhitâ which are developed the one

from the other as it were an unfolding series. In the Tantrik Sangraha called Sarvollāsa by the Sarvavidyāsiddha Sarvānandanātha the latter cites authority (Nārāyaṇī Tantra) to show that from Nigama came Āgama. Here I pause to note that the Sammohana says that Kerala Sampradāya is Dakshina and follows Veda (Vedamārgastha) whilst Gauda (to which Sarvānandanātha belonged) is Vāma and follow Nigama. Hence apparently the pre-eminence given to Nigama. He then says from Āgama came Yāmala, from Yāmala the four Vedas, from Vedas the Purāṇas, from Purāṇas Smṛiti and from Smṛiti all other Shāstras. There are, he says, five Nigamas and 64 Āgamas. Four Yāmalas are mentioned, which are said to give the Sthūlarūpa. As some may be surprised to learn that the four Vedas came from the Yāmalas (i.e. were Antargata of the Yāmalas) which literally means what is uniting or comprehensive, I subjoin the Sanskrit verse from Nārāyaṇī Tantra.

*Brahmayāmala sambhūtam sāmaveda matam shive  
Rudrayāmala samjātaḥ rigvedo paramo mahān  
Vishnuyāmala sambhūtaḥ yajurvedaḥ kuleshvare  
Shaktiyāmala sambhūtam atharva paramam mahat.*

Some Tantras are called by opposing sects Vedaviruddhāni (opposed to Veda) which of course those who accept them deny just as the Commentary of the Nityashodasikārnava speaks of the Pancharātrina as Vedabhrashta. That some sects were originally Avaidika there is no doubt but in process of time various amalgamation of scriptural authority, belief and practice took place.

Whether we accept or not this theory according to which the Āgamas and kindred Shāstras are given not merely equal authority with the four Vikāra Vedas but in a sense priority (that is of derivation), we have to accept the facts. What are these.

As I have said, on examination the one body of Hinduism reveals as it were a double framework. I am now looking at the matter from an outside point of view which is not that of the Shākta worshipper. We find on the one hand the four Vedas with their Samhitās, Brāhmanas, and Upanishads and on the other what has been called the "Fifth Veda" that is Nigama, Āgama and kindred Shāstras and certain especially 'Tantrik' Upanishads attached to the Saubhāgya Kānda of the Atharvaveda. There are Vaidik and Tantrik Kalpa Sūtras and Sūktas such as the Tantrikā Devī and Matsya Sūktas. As a counter-part of the Brahmasūtras we have the Shakti Sūtras of Agastya. Then there is both Vaidik and "Tantrik" ritual such as the ten Vaidik

Sangskāras and the Tantrik Sangskāras such as Abhisheka Vaidik and Tantrik initiation (Upanāyana and Dīkshā) Vaidik and Tantrik Gāyatrī; the Vaidik Om, the Tantrik Bījas such as Hring; Vaidika Guru and Deshika Guru and so forth. This dualism may be found carried into other matters as well such as medicine, law, writing. So whilst the Vaidik Ayurveda employed vegetable drugs, the "Tantriks" used metallic substances. A counterpart of the Vaidik Dharmapatni was the Shaiva wife, that is, she who is given by desire (Kāma). I have already pointed out the counterparts of the Panchatatva in the Vedas. Some allege a special form of Tantrik script at any rate in Gauda Desha and so forth.

What is the meaning of all this? It is not at present possible to give a certain answer. The subject has been so neglected and is so little known. Before tendering any conclusions with any certainty of their correctness we must examine the Tantrik Texts which time has spared. It will be readily perceived however that if there be such a double frame as I suggest, it indicates that there were originally two sources of religion one of which (possibly in some respects the older) incorporated parts of, and in time largely superseded, the other. And this is what the Tantriks impliedly allege in their views as to the relation of the four Vedas and Āgamas. If they are not both of authority, why should such reverence be given to the Deshika Gurus and to Tantrik Dīkshā?

Probably there were many Aavidika cults not without a deep and ancient wisdom of their own, that is, cults outside the Vaidik religion (Vedabāhya) which in the course of time adopted certain Vaidik rites such as Homa: the Vaidikas in their own turn taking up some of the Aavidika practices. It may be that some Brāhmanas joined these so-called Anārya Sampradāyas just as we find to-day Brāhmanas officiating for low castes and being called by their name. At length the Shāstras of the two cults were given at least equal authority. The Vaidik practices then largely disappeared, surviving chiefly both in the Smārta rites of to-day and as embedded in the ritual of the Āgamas. These are speculations to which I do not definitely commit myself. They are merely suggestions which may be worth consideration when search is made for the origin of the Āgamas. If they be correct, then in this, as in other cases, the beliefs and practices of the soil have been upheld until to-day against the incoming cults of those "Āryas" who followed the Vaidik rites and who in their turn influenced the various religious communities without the Vaidik fold.

The Smārtas of to-day represent what generally called the Shrāuta side though in these rites there are mingled many Puranic ingredients. The Ārya Samāja is another present-day representative of the old Vaidika Âchâra, mingled as it seems to me with a modernism, which is puritan and otherwise. The other or Tantrik side is represented by the general body of present day Hinduism and in particular by the various sectarian divisions of Shaivas, Shâktas, Vaishnavas and so forth which go to its making.

Each sect of worshippers has its own Tantras. In two articles in recent numbers of the Prabuddha Bhārata I have shortly referred to the Tantras of the Shaivasiddhânta, of the Pancharâtra Âgama and of the Northern Shaivism of which the Mālinivijaya Tantra sets the type. The old fivefold division of worshippers was according to the Pancho-pâsana, Saura, Gānapatya, Vaishnava, Shaiva, and Shâkta whose Mûla Devatās were Sûryya, Ganapati, Vishnu, Shiva and Shakti respectively. At the present time the threefold division Vaishnava, Shaiva, Shâkta, is of more practical importance as the other two survive only to a limited extent to-day. In parts of Western India the worship of Ganesha is still popular and I believe some Sauras or traces of Sauras here and there exist especially in Sind.

There are mentioned in the Tantras six Âmnâyas. The Sammohana Tantra (Ch. v.) first explains Pûrvâmnâya, Dakshinâmnâya, Paschimâmnâya, Uttarâmnâya, Urdhvâmnâya according to what is called Deshaparyyâya. The sixth or lower and concealed face (Adhâmnâya) is that from which exudes poison (Visha). I believe no Pûjâ of this is generally done but Shadanvaya Sâmbhavas very high Sâdhakas at the door of Liberation do Nyâsa with this sixth and concealed Face. It is said that Pâtâla Âmnâya is Sambhogayoga. The Nishkala aspect in Shaktikrama is for Pûrva, Tripurâ; for Dakshina, Saura Gānapatya and Vaishnava; for Paschima, Raudra Bhairavas; for Uttara, Ugrâ, Âpattârint. In Shaivakarma the same aspect is for the first Sampatpradâ and Mahesha; for the second Aghora Kâlikâ and Vaishnava darshana; for the third, Raudra, Bhairavas Shaivas; for the fourth, Kuvera, Bhairava Saudarshaka; and for Urdhvâmnâya, Arddhanârisha and Pranava.

It also gives a classification of Tantras according to the Âmnâyas as also special classifications such as the Tantras of the six Âmnâyas according to Vatukâmnâya. As only one Text of the Sammohana is available whilst I write it is not possible to speak with certainty of bly as regards all these details.

Each of these divisions of worshippers have their own Tantras and also had the Jainas and Bauddhas. Different sects had their own particular subdivisions and Tantras of which there are various classifications according to Krântās, Deshaparyyāya, Kālaparyyāya and so forth.

The Sammohana Tantra mentions 22 different Āgamas including Chināgama (a Shākta form), Pāshupata, (a Shaiva form) Pancharātra, (a Vaishnava form) Kāpālīka, Bhairava, Aghora, Jaina, Bauddha; each of which is said there to contain a certain number of Tantras and Upatantras.

According to the Sammohana Tantra, the Tantras according to Kālaparyyāya are the 64 Shākta Tantras, with 327 Upatantras, 8 Yāmalas, 4 Dāmaras, 2 Kalpalatās and several Samhitās, Chudāmanis (100) Ārnavaś, Purānaś, Upavedaś, Kakshajūtaś, Vimarshini and Chintāmanis. The Shaiva class contains 32 Tantras with its own Yāmalas, Dāmaras and so forth. The Vaishnava class contains 75 Tantras with the same including Kalpas and Upabodhas. The Saura class has 30 Tantras with its own Yāmalas, Uddishas and other works. And the Gānapatya class contains 50 Tantras with Upatantras, Kalpas and other Shāstraś including one Dāmara and one Yāmala. The Bauddha class contains Kalpadrumaś, Kāmadhenuś, Suktas, Kramaś, Ambaraś, Purānaś and other Shāstraś.

According to the Kulārṇava and Jnānadīpa Tantras there are seven Āchāraś of which the first four, Vaidika, Vaishnava, Shaiva and Dakshina belong to Pashvāchāra; then comes Vāma followed by Siddhanta in which gradual approach is made to Kaulāchāra the reputed highest. Elsewhere six and nine Āchāraś are spoken of and different kind of Bhāvaś, Sabhāva Vibhāva and Dehabhāva and so forth which are referred to in Bhāvachudāmani.

The main divisions here are Vedāchāra, Dakshināchāra and Vāmāchāra. Vedāchāra is not, it seems, Vaidikāchāra, that is, in the Shrouta sense, for the Shrouta Vaidikāchāra appears to be outside this sevenfold Tantrik division of which Vedāchāra is the Tantrik counterpart. For it is said to be Tantrik Upāsana with Vaidik rites and mantras, and Agni as Devatā. As a speculation we may suggest that this Āchāra was for those not Adhikārti for what is called the Shrouta Vaidikāchāra. I have been told that in this Āchāra there is no division of Dakshina and Vāma; names of differing Sādhana giving later by the Āchāryyaś. The second and third belong to and lead up to the completed



Dakshinâchâra. This is Pashvâchâra. Vâmâchâra commences the other mode of worship leading up to the completed Kaula and beyond to the Kaulâvadhâta, Avadhâta, and Divya. Here we reach the region which is beyond all Âchâras which is known as Svechhâchâra. All that those belonging to this state do or touch is pure. In and after Vâmâchâra there is eating and drinking in and as part of worship and it may be (though not necessarily so) Maithuna. After the Pashu there is the Vira and then the Divya. Pashu is the starting point, Virâ is on the way and Divya is the goal. Each of the sects has a Dakshina and Vâma division. It is commonly thought that this is peculiar to Shâktas : but this is not so. Thus there are Vâma Gânapatyas and Vaishnavas and so forth. Again Vâmâchâra is itself divided again into a right and left side. In the former wine is taken in a cup of stone or other substance and worship is with the Svakiyâ Shakti or Sâdhaka's own wife ; in the latter and more advanced stage drinking is done from a skull and worship may be with Parastrî that is some other Shakti. In the case however of some sects who belong to the Vâmâchâra division whilst there is meat and wine, there is no Shakti for the members are chaste (Brahmachârî). So far as I can ascertain these sects which are mentioned later seem to belong to the Shaiva as opposed to the Shâkta group.

The Tantrik Sangraha called Shâktânanda Tarangini by Brahmânanda Svâmi says (Ch. 2) that Âgama is both Sadâgama and Asadâgama and that the former alone is Âgama according to the primary meaning of the word (Sadâgama eva âgamashabdasya mukhyatvât). He then says that Shiva in the Âgama Samhitâ condemns the Asadâgama saying "Oh Deveshi, men in the Kali age are generally of a Rajasik and Tamasik disposition and being addicted to forbidden ways deceive many others. Oh Sureshvari, those who *in disregard of their Varnâshrama Dharma* offer to us flesh blood and wine become Bhûtas, Pretas, and Brahmarâkshasas", that is various forms of evil spirits. This prohibits such worship as is opposed to Varnâshramadharmâ. It is said however by the Vâmâchâris, who take consecrated wine and flesh as a Yajna, not to cover their case.

It is not uncommonly thought that Vâmâchâra is that Âchâra into which Vâmâ or women enters. This is true only to a certain extent : that is, it is a true definition of those Sâdhakas who do worship with Shakti according to Vâmâchâra rites. But it is incorrect in so far as there are worshippers of the Vâmâchâra division who are chaste

(Brahmachâri) Vamâchâra means literally left way not 'left handed' in the English sense which means what is bad. As the name is given to these Sâdhakas by themselves it is not likely that they would adopt a title which condemns them. What they mean is that this âchâra is the opposite of Dakshinâchâra. Philosophically it is more monistic. It is said that even in the highest Siddhi of a Dakshinâchâri "there is always some One above him"; but the fruit of Vamâchâra and its subsequent and highest stages is that the Sâdhaka "becomes the Emperor Himself." The Bhâva differs, and the power of its method compared with Dakshinâchâra is said to be that between milk and wine.

Moreover it is to be noted that the Devi whom they worship is on the left of Shiva. In Vamâchâra we find Kâpâlikas, Kâlâmukhas, Pâshupatas, Bhândikeras, Digambaras, Aghoras, followers of Chinâchâra and Kaulas generally who are initiated. In some cases, as in that of the advanced division of Kaulas, worship is with all five Tattvas (Panchatattva). In some cases there is Brahmacharya as in the case of Aghora and Pâshupata though these drink wine and eat flesh food. Some Vamâcharis, I am informed, never cease to be chaste (Brahmachâri), such as Oghada Sadhus, worshippers of Batuka Bhairava, Kanthâdhâri and followers of the Nâthas, such as Gorakshanâtha, Sitanâtha and Matsyendranâtha. In Nilakrama there is no Maithuna. In some sects there are differing practices. Thus I am told amongst the Kâlâmukhas the Kâlaviras only worship Kumâris up to the age of nine whereas the Kâmamohanas worship with adult Shaktis.

Some advanced members of this (in its general sense) Vamâchâra division do not, I am informed, even take wine and meat. It is said that the great Vamâchâri Sâdhaka Râjâ Krishnachandra of Nadia, Upâsaka of the Chhinnamastâ Mûrti did not take wine. Such and similar Sâdhakas have passed beyond the preliminary stage of Vamâchâra. As regards Sâdhakas generally it is well to remember what the Mâhâkâla Samhitâ the great Shâstra of the Madhyasta Kaulas says in the 11th Ullâsa called Sharîra yoga kathanam :—"Some Kaulas there are who seek the good of this world (aihiikârthadhrîtâtmanah). So also the Vaidikas enjoy what is here (aihiikârtham kâmayante) (as do, I may interpose, the vast bulk of present humanity) and are not seekers of liberation (amrite ratim na kurvanti). Only by Nishkâmasâdhanâ is liberation attained."

The P  
va are either real (Pratyaksha) ( g" state-

tional (Anukalpa) and esoteric (Divyatattva) As regards the second, even a vegetarian would not object to 'meat' which is in fact ginger nor the abstainer to "wine" which is cocoanut water in a bellmetal vessel. As for the Esoteric Tattva they are not material articles or practices but the symbols for Yogic processes. Again some notions and practices are more moderate and others extreme. The account given in the Mahānirvāṇa of the Bhairavi and Tattva Chakras may be compared with some more unrestrained practice ; and the former again may be contrasted with a modern Chakra described in the 13th Chapter of the Life of Bejoy Krishna Gosvāmi by Jagadbandu Maitra. There a Tāntrika Siddha formed a Chakra at which the Gosvāmi was present. The latter says that all who were there felt as if the Shakti was their own Mother who had borne them, and the Devatās whom the Chakreshvara invoked appeared in the circle to accept the offerings. Whether this is accepted as a fact or not it is obvious that it was intended to describe a Chakra of a different kind from that of which we have more commonly heard. There are some practices which are not correctly understood ; there some principles which the bulk of men will not understand ; for to so understand there must be besides knowledge that undefinable Bhāva, the possession of which carries with it the explanation which no words can give. There are expressions which do not bear their surface meaning. Gomāṅgaśa bakshana is not "beef eating" but putting the tongue in the root of the throat. What some translate

"Ravishing the widow" does not mean a woman but refers to a process in Kundali Yoga and so forth. Lastly and this is important ; distinction is seldom if ever made between Shāstric principles and actual practice, nor is count taken of the conditions properly governing the worship and its abuse. It is easy to understand that if Hinduism as in general degenerated, there has been a fall here. It is however a mistake to suppose that the sole object of these rites is enjoyment. It is not necessary to be a "Tāntrik" for that. The moral of all this is that it is better to know the facts than to make erroneous generalisations.

There are said to be three Krāntas or geographical divisions of India of which roughly speaking the North-Eastern portion is Vishnukrānta, the North-Western Rāṭhākrānta and the remaining and Southern portion is Ashvākrānta. According to the Shāktamangalā and Mahāsiddhasāra Tantras, Vishnukrānta (which includes Bengal) extends from the Vindhya range to Chittala or Chittagong. From

Vindhya to Thibet and China is Rathakrânta. There is then some difference between these two Tantras as to the position of Ashvakrânta. According to the first this last Krânta extends from the Vindhya to the sea which perhaps includes the rest of India and countries up to Persia. According to the Mahāsiddhasâra Tantra it extends from the Karatoiyâ River to a point which cannot be identified with certainty in the text cited but which may be Java. To each of these 64 Tantras have been assigned. One of the question awaiting solution is whether the Tantras of these three geographical divisions are marked by doctrinal and ritual peculiarities and if so what they are. This subject has been referred to in the first volume of the "Principles of Tantra" wherein a list of Tantras is given.

In the Shâkta division there are four Sampradâyas namely Kerala, Kashmira, Gauda and Vilâsa in each of which there is both outer and inner worship. The Sammohana Tantra gives these four Sampradâyas, also the number of Tantras not only in the first three Sampradâyas but in China and Drâvida. I have been informed that out of 56 Desha (which included beside Hunas, places outside India, such as China, Mahâchina, Bhota, Singhala), 18 follow Gauda extending from Nepâla to Kalinga and 19 follow Kerala extending from Vindhyaâchala to the Southern Sea, the remaining countries forming part of the Kashmira Desha; and that in each Sampradâya there are Paddhatis such as Shuddha, Gupta, Ugra. There is variance in Devatâs and Rituals some of which are explained in the Târasukta and Shaktisangama Tantra.

There are also various Matas such as Kâdi Mata which is called Virâdanuttara of which the Devatâ is Kâlî; Hâdi Mata called Hangsarâja of which Tripurasundari is Devatâ and Kahâdi Mata the combination of the two of which Târâ is Devatâ that is Nilasarasvati. Certain Deshas are called Kâdi, Hâdi, Ka-hâdis Deshas and each Mata has several Âmnâyas. It is said that the Hangsatârâ Mahâvidyâ is the Sovereign Lady of Yoga whom Jainas call Padmâvati, Shâktas Shakti, Baudhdhas Târâ, China Sâdhakas Mahogrâ and Kaulas Chakreshvari. The Kâdis call her Kâlî, the Hâdis Shrisundari and the Kâdi-Hâdis Hangsâ. A forthcoming volume of "Tantrik Texts" contains that portion of the Tantrarâja which belongs to Kâdi Matam.

Gauda Sampradâya considers Kâdi the highest Mata, whilst Kashmira and Kerala worship Tripura and Târâ. Possibly there may have been originally Deshas which were the exclusive seats of specific

schools of Tantra but later and at present, so far as they exist, this cannot be said. In each of the Deshas different Sampradāyas may be found though doubtless at particular places, as in Bengal, particular sects may be predominant.

In my opinion it is not yet possible to present with both accuracy and completeness the doctrine and practice of any particular Tantrik School and to indicate wherein it differs from other Schools. It is not possible at present to say fully precisely who the original Shāktas were, the nature of their sub-divisions and of their relation to, or distinction from, some of the Shaiva group. Thus the Kaulas are generally in Bengal included in the Brahmajñāni Shākta group but the Sammohana in one passage already cited mentions Kaula and Shākta separately. Possibly it is there meant to distinguish ordinary Shāktas from the special group called Kaula Shāktas. In Kashmir some Kaulas, I believe, call themselves Shaivas. For an answer to these and other questions we must await a further examination of the texts. At present I am doing Pangkoddhāra not in the expectation that I can wholly clear away the mud and weeds but with a desire to make a beginning which others may complete.

He who has not understood Tantra Shāstra has not understood what "Hinduism" is as it exists to-day. The subject is an important part of Indian culture and therefore worth study by the duly qualified. What I have said should be sufficient to want the ignorant from making rash generalizations. At present we can say that he who worships the Mantra and Yantra of Shakti is a Shākta and that there were several Sampradāyas of these worshippers. What we can and should first do is to study the Shākta Darshana as it exists to-day working back from the known to the unknown. What I am about to describe is the Shākta faith as it exists *to-day* that is Shaktivāda not as something entirely new but as the development and amalgamation of the various cults which were its ancestors.

Summarising Shākta doctrine we may first affirm that it is *Advaitavāda* or Monism. This we might expect seeing that it flourished in Bengal which as the old Gauda Desha is the Guru both of Advaitavāda and of Tantra Shāstra. From Gauda came Gaudapādāchāryya, Madhusūdana Sarasvatī author of the great Advaitasiddhi, Ramchandra-tīrthabhārati, Chitsukhāchāryya and others. There seems to me to be a strong deposition in the Brahmaparāyana Bengali temperament towards Advaitavāda. For all Advaitins the Shākta Āgama and ~~Advaita~~ Shaivāgama must be the highest form of worship. A detailed

account of the Advaita teachings of the Shâktas a matter of great complexity and of a highly esoteric character beyond the scope of this paper. I may here note that the Shâkta Tantras speak of 94 Tattvas made up of 10, 12 and 16 Kalâs of Fire, Sun and Moon aspects of Kâmakalâ respectively ; and 19 of Sadâshiva, 6 of Ishvara, 10 each of Rudra, Vishnu and Brahmâ. The 51 Kalâs or Mâtrikâs which are the Sâkshmarûpa of the 51 letters (Varna) are a portion of these 94. These are the 51 coils of Kundali from Bindu to Shrimâtrikotpatti Sundari. These are all worshipped in the wine jar by those Shâktas who take wine. The Shâstras also set out the 36 Tattvas which are common to Shâktas and Shaivas ; the five Kalâs which are Sâmânya of the Tattvas namely Nivritti, Pratishtâ, Vidyâ, Shântâ, Shântyatitâ, and the Shadadhvâs namely, Kalâ, Tattva, Bhuvana, Varna, Pada, and Mantra.

To pass to more popular matters, a beautiful and tender concept of the Shâktas is the *Motherhood of God*, that is God as Shakti or the Power which produces, maintains and withdraws the universe. This is the thought of a worshipper. Though the Sammohana Tantra gives high place to Shankara as conqueror of Buddhism, (speaking of him as a manifestation of Shiva and identifying his five disciples with the five Mahâpretas), the Âgamas as Shâstras of worship do not teach Mâyâvâda as set forth according to Shankaras transcendental method. Mâyâ to the Shâkta whorshipper is not an unconscious something not real, not unreal, not real-unreal, which is associated with Brahman in its Ishvara aspect, though it is not Brahman. Brahman is never associated with anything but Itself. Mâyâ to the Shâkta is Shakti ; Shakti veiling Herself as Consciousness, but which as being Shakti is Consciousness. To the Shâkta all that he sees is the Mother. All is Consciousness. This is the standpoint of Sâdhana. The Advaitins of Shankara's School claim that their doctrine is given from the standpoint of Siddhi. I will not argue this question here. When Siddhi is obtained there will be no argument. Until that event Man is, it is admitted, subject to Mâyâ and must think and act according to the forms which it imposes on him. It is more important after all to realise in fact the universal presence of the Divine Consciousness than to attempt to explain it in philosophical terms.

The Divine Mother first appears in and as Her worshipper's earthly mother, then as his wife ; thirdly as Kâlikâ, She reveals Herself in old age, disease and death. It is She who manifests, and not without a

purpose, in the vast outpouring of Sanghaia Shakti which is witnessed in the great world conflict of to day. The terrible beauty of such forms is not understood. And so we get the recent utterance of a Missionary Professor at Madras who being moved to horror at the sight of (I think the Châmundâmûrti called the Devi a "She-Devil". Lastly she takes to Herself the dead body in the fierce tongues of flame which light the funeral pyre.

The Monist is naturally unsectarian and so the Shâkta faith as held by those who understand it is *free from a narrow sectarian spirit*.

Nextly it like the other Âgamas, makes provision for *all castes* and *both sexes*. Whatever be the true doctrine of the Vaidikas their practice is in fact marked by exclusiveness. Thus they exclude woman and Shûdras. It is easy to understand why the so-called Anâryya Sampradâyas did not do so. A glorious feature of the Shâkta faith is the *honour which it pays to woman*. And this is natural for those who worship the Great Mother whose representative (Vigraha) all earthly women are. Striyo devâh striyah prânâh. "Women are Devas ; women are life itself," as an old Hymn in the Sarvollâsa has it. It is because woman is a Vighraha of the Ambâ Devi, Her likeness in flesh and blood that the Shâkta Tantras enjoin the honour and worship of women and girls (Kumâris), and forbade all harm to them such as the Sati rite, enjoining that not even a female animal is to be sacrificed. With the same solicitude for women the Mahânirvâna enjoins the education of daughters before their marriage. It is the Shâkta Tantras again which *allow of women being Guru*, a reverence which the West has not yet given them. Initiation by a Mother bears eightfold fruit. Indeed to the enlightened Shâkta the whole universe is Stri or Shakti. "Aham Stri" as the Advaitabhâva Upanishad says, A high worship therefore which can be offered to the Mother to-day is to get rid of abuses which have neither the authority of ancient Shâstra, nor of modern social science and to honour, cherish, educate and advance women. (Shakti.) Striyo devâh striyah prânâh. Gautamiya Tantra says Sarvavarnâdhikârashcha nârtinâm yogya evacha : and the Mahânirvâna says that the low Kaula who refuses initiate a Chandâla or Yavana or a woman out of disrespect goes the downward path. No one is excluded from anything except on the grounds of a real and not artificial or imagined incompetency

An American Orientalist critic in speaking of 'the worthlessness of Tantrik philosophy' says that it is *Religious Feminism run mad* adding : "What is all this but the the *feminisation* of orthodox Vedānta ? It is a doctrine for *suffragette* Monists : the dogma unsupported by any evidence that *the female principle antedates and includes the male principle*, and that this female principle is supreme Divinity". The "worthlessness" of the Tantrik philosophy is a personal opinion on which nothing need be said, the more particularly that Orientalists who, with insufficient knowledge, have already committed themselves to this view are not likely to easily abandon it. The present criticism, however, in disclosing the grounds on which it is based, has shown that they are without worth. Were it not for such ignorant notions it would be unnecessary to say that the Shākta Sādhaka does not believe that there is a Woman Suffragette or otherwise, in the sky, surrounded by the members of some celestial feminist association who rules the male members of the universe. As the Yāmala says for the benefit of the ignorant "neyam yoshit na cha pumāu na shandah na jadah smritah." Nor is his doctrine concerned with the theories of the American Professor Lester Ward and others as to the alleged pre-eminence of the female principle. We are not here dealing with questions of science or sociology. It is a common fault of western criticism that it gives material interpretations of Indian Scripture and so misunderstands it. The Shākta doctrine is concerned with those Spiritual Principles which exist before and are the origin of both men and women. Whether in the appearance of the animal species the female "antedates" the male is a question with which it is not concerned. Nor does it say that the "female principle" is the supreme Divinity. Shiva the "male" is co-equal with Shivā the "female," for both are one and the same. An Orientalist might have remembered that in the Sāṅkhya, Prakriti is spoken of as "female," and Purusha as "male". And in Vedānta, Māyā and Devī are of the feminine gender. Shakti is not a male nor a female "person," nor a male nor a female "principle," in the sense in which sociology, which is concerned with gross matter, uses those terms. Shakti is symbolically "female" because it is the productive principle. Shiva, in so far as He represents the Chit aspect, is actionless (Niskriya), though the two are inseparably associated even in creation. The supreme is the attributeless (Nirguna) Shiva, or the neuter Brahman which is neither "male" nor "female". With such mistaken general views of the doctrine, it was not likely that its more subtle aspects by way of relation to Shāṅkara's Māyāvāda or the Sāṅkhya



should be appreciated. The doctrine of Shakti has no more to do with 'Feminism' than it has to do with 'old age pensions' or any other sociological movement of the day. This is a good instance of those apparently "smart" and cocksure judgments which Orientalists and others pass on things Indian. The errors would be less ridiculous if they were on occasions more modest as regards their claims to know and understand. What is still more important, they would not probably in such case give unnecessary ground for offence.

The characteristic features of Shākta-dharma are thus its Monism ; its concept of the Motherhood of God ; its unsectarian spirit and provision for Shūdras and women, to the latter of whom it renders high honour recognizing that they may be even Gurus ; and lastly its Sābhanā skilfully designed to realise its teachings.

As I have pointed out on many an occasion this question of *Sādhana* is of the highest importance, and has been in recent times much overlooked. It is that which more than anything else gives value to the Āgama or Tantra Shāstra. Mere talk about religion is only an intellectual exercise. Of what use are grand phrases about Ātmā on the lips of those who hate and injure one another and will not help the poor. Religion is kindness. Religion again is a practical activity. Mind and body must be trained. There is a spiritual as well as a mental and physical gymnastic. According to Shākta doctrine each man and woman contains within himself and herself a vast latent magazine of Power or Shakti, a term which comes from the root "Shak" to be able, to have force to do, to act. They are each Shakti and nothing but Shakti, for the Svarūpa of Shakti is Consciousness and mind and body are Shakti. The problem then is how to raise and vivify Shakti. This is the work of Sābhanā in the Religion of Power. The Āgama is a practical philosophy, and as a Bengali friend of mine Professor Pramathanath Mukhopādhyāya has well put it, what the intellectual world wants to-day is the sort of philosophy which not merely *argues* but *experiments*. This is Kriyā. The form which Sābhanā takes necessarily varies according to faith, temperament and capacity. Thus amongst Christians the Catholic Church like Hinduism has a full and potent Sābhanā in its Sacraments (Sangskāra), temple (Church) and private worship (Pujā, Upāsana) with Upachāra "bell, light and incense" (Ghanta, Dīpa, Dhūpa), Images or Pratimā (hence it has been called idolatrous), devotional rites such as Novenas and the like, (Vrata) the threefold Angelus at morn, noon and evening

(Sandhyā) 1084 (Japa) the wearing of Kavachas (Scapulars Medals Agnus Dei) pilgrimage (Tirthā) fasting abstinence and mortification (Tapas), renunciation (Sannyasa), meditation (Dhyāna), ending in the union of mystical theology (Samādhi) and so forth. There are other smaller details such for instance as Shānti abhisheka (Asperges) into which I need not enter here. I may however mention the Spiritual Director who occupies the place of the Guru ; the worship (Hyperduha) of the Virgin-Mother which made Svāmī Vivekānanda call the Italian Catholics Shāktas ; and the use of wine (Madya) and bread (corresponding to Mudrā) in the Eucharist or Communion Service. Whilst however the Blessed Virgin evokes devotion as warm as that which is here paid to Devī she is not Devī for she is not God but a creature selected as the vehicle of His incarnation (Avatāra). In the Eucharist the bread and wine are the body and blood of Christ appearing under the form or "accidents" of those material substances ; so also Tārā is Dravamayī that is the "Saviour in liquid form." In the Catholic Church, (though the early practice was otherwise,) the laity no longer take wine but bread only, the officiating priest consuming both. Whilst however the outward forms in this case are similar, the inner meaning is different. Those however who contend that eating and drinking are inconsistent with the "dignity" of worship may be reminded of Tertullian's saying that Christ instituted His great sacrament at a meal. These notions are those of the dualist with all his distinctions. For the Advaitin every function and act may be made a Yajna. Agape or "Love Feasts," a kind of Chakra, were held in early times and discontinued as orthodox practice on account of abuses to which they led ; though they are said still to exist in some of the smaller Christian sects of the day. There are other points of ritual which are peculiar to the Tantra Shāstra and of which there is no counterpart in the Catholic ritual such as Nyāsa and Yantra. Mantra exists in the form of prayer and as formulae of consecration but otherwise the subject is conceived of differently here. There are certain gestures (Mudrā) made in the ritual as when consecrating, blessing, and so forth but they are not so numerous or prominent as they are here. I may some day more fully develop these interesting analogies but what I have said is for the present sufficient to establish the numerous similarities which exist between the Catholic and Indian Tantric ritual. Because of these facts the "reformed" Christian sects have charged the Catholic Church with "Paganism". It is in fact the inheritor of very ancient practices but is not necessarily the originator of them. The Hindu finds his Sādhana in the Tantras of the Agamas.

in forms which his race has evolved. In the abstract there is no reason why his race should not modify these forms of Sādhana or evolve new ones. But the point is that *it must have some form of Sādhana*. Any system to be fruitful must *experiment to gain experience*. It is because of its powerful sacraments and disciplines that in the West the Catholic Church has survived to this day holding firm upon its "Rock" amid the dissolving sects born of what is called the "Reform". It is like to exist when these, as presently existing sects, will have disappeared. All things survive by virtue of the truth in them. The particular truth to which I here refer is that a faith cannot be maintained by mere hymn-singing and pious addresses. For this reason too Hinduism has survived.

This is not to say that either of these will, as presently existing forms, continue until the end of time. The so called Reformed or Protestant sects, whether of West or East, are, when viewed in relation to man in general, the imperfect expression of a truth misunderstood and misapplied namely that the higher man spiritually ascends the less dependent is he on form. The mistake which such sects make is to look at the matter from one side only and to suppose that all men are alike in their requirement. The Āgama is guilty of no such error. It offers form in all its fulness and richness to those below the stage of Yoga at which point man reaches what the Kulārṇava Tantra calls the Varna and Āshrama of Light (Jyotirvarṇāśramam) and gradually releases himself from all form that he may unite his self with the Formless One. I do not know which most to admire—the colossal affirmations of Indian doctrine or the wondrous variety of the differing disciplines which it prescribes for their realisation in fact.

The Buddhists called Brahmanism Śīlavrataparāmarsha, that is a system believing in the efficacy of ritual acts. And so it is, and so at length was Buddhism, when passing through Mahayāna it ended up with the full Tantrik Sādhana of the Vajrayāna School. There are human tendencies which cannot be suppressed. Hinduism will however disappear if and when Sādhana (whatever be its form) ceases; for that will be the day on which it will no longer be something real but the mere subject of philosophical and historical talk. Apart from its great doctrine of Shakti the main significance of the Shākta Tantra Śāstra lies in this that it affirms the principle of the *necessity of Sādhana* and claims to afford a *means* available to all of whatever *caste* and of either *sex* whereby the teachings of Vedānta may be practically realised.

But do not take any statement from any one myself included blindly, without examining and testing it. I am only concerned to state the facts as I know them. It is man's prerogative to think. The Sanskrit word for "man" comes from the root "to think". Those of you here who are Shâktas may be pleased at what I have said about your faith. It must not however be supposed that a doctrine is necessarily true simply because it is old. There are some hoary errors. As for science its conclusions shift from year to year. Recent discoveries have so abated its pride that it has considerably ceased to give itself those pontifical airs which formerly annoyed some of us. Most will feel that if they are to bow to any Master it should be to a spiritual one. A few will think that they can safely walk alone. Philosophy again is one of the noblest of life's pursuit but here too we must examine to see whether what is proposed for our acceptance is well-founded. The maxim is current that there is nothing so absurd but that it has been held by some philosopher or another. We must each ourselves judge and choose and if honest, none can blame our choice. We must put all to the test. Recollect the words of your Shruti—"Man-tavyah, shrotavyah"—"listen, ponder and discuss;" for as Manu says "Yastarkenânusandhatte sa dharmam veda, netarah"—"He who by discussion investigates, he knows Dharma and none other." Ultimately there is experience alone which in Shâkta speech is Sâham—"I am She."

## CHIT SHAKTI

(THE SPIRIT ASPECT OF THE UNIVERSE).

Chit-Shakti is Chit as Shakti that is as power, or that aspect of Chit in which it is, through its associated *Māyā-Shakti*, operative to create the universe. It is a commonly accepted doctrine that the ultimate Reality is *Samvid*, *Chaitanya* or *Chit*.

But what is Chit? There is no word in the English language which adequately describes it. It is not mind: for mind is a limited instrument through which Chit is manifested. It is that which is behind the mind and by which the mind itself is thought; that is created. The Brahman is mindless (*Amanah*). If we exclude mind we also exclude all forms of mental process, conception, perception, thought, reason, will, memory, particular sensation and the like. We are then left with three available words namely, *Consciousness*, *Feeling*, *Experience*. To the first term there are several objections. For if we use an English word we must understand it according to its generally received meaning. Generally by "*Consciousness*" is meant self-consciousness or at least something particular, having direction and form which is concrete and conditioned; an evolved product marking the higher stages of Evolution. According to some, it is a mere function of experience, an epiphenomenon, a mere accident of mental process. In this sense it belongs only to the highly developed organism and involves a subject attending to an object of which, as of itself, it is conscious. We are thus said to have most consciousness when we are awake (*Jāgrat avasthā*) and have full experience of all objects presented to us; less so when dreaming (*Svapna avasthā*) and deep anaesthesia in true dreamless sleep (*Sushupti*). I may here observe that recent researches show that this last state is not so common as is generally supposed. That is complete dreamlessness is rare; there being generally some trace of dream. In the last state it is commonly said that consciousness has disappeared, and so of course it has if we first define consciousness in terms of the waking state and of knowledge of objects. According to Indian notions there is a form of conscious experience in the deepest sleep expressed in the well-known phrase "*Happily I slept I knew nothing.*" The sleeper recollects on waking that his state has been one of happiness. And he cannot recollect unless there has been a previous experience (*anubhava*) which is the subject-matter of memory. In ordinary parlance we do not regard some animal forms, plants, or

minerals as "conscious" It is true that now in the west there is (due to the spread of ideas long current in India) growing up a wider use of the term "consciousness" in connection not only with animal but vegetable and mineral life but it cannot be said that the term "consciousness" has yet generally acquired this wide signification. If then we use (as for convenience we do) the term "consciousness" for Chit, we must give it a content different from that which is attributed to the term in ordinary English parlance. Nextly, it is to be remembered that what in either view we understand by consciousness is something manifested and therefore limited and derived from our finite experience. The Brahman as Chit is the infinite substratum of that. Chit in itself (Svarûpa) is not particular, nor conditioned and concrete. Particularity is that aspect in which it manifests as and through Mâyâ-Shakti. Chit manifests as Jñâna-Shakti which, when used otherwise than as a loose synonym for Chit, means knowledge of objects. Chit-Svarûpa is neither knowledge of objects nor self-consciousness in the phenomenal sense. Waking, dreaming and dreamless slumber are all phenomenal states in which experience varies; such variance being due not to Chit but to the operation or cessation of particular operation of the vehicles of mind (Antahkarana) and sense (Indriya). But Chit never disappears nor varies in either of the three states but remains one and the same through all. Though Chit-Svarûpa is not a knowledge of objects in the phenomenal sense it is not, according to Shaiva-Shakta views (I refer always to Advaita Shaiva-darshana) a mere abstract knowing (Jñâna) wholly devoid of content. It contains within itself the Vimarsha-Shakti which is the cause of phenomenal objects then existing in the form of Chit (Chidrûpini). The Self then knows the Self. Still less can we speak of mere "awareness" as the equivalent of Chit. A worm or meaner form of animal may be said to be vaguely aware. In fact mere "awareness" (as we understood that term) is a state of Chit in which it is seemingly overwhelmed by obscuring Mâyâ-Shakti in the form of Tamoguna. Unless therefor we give to "awareness", as to consciousness, a content, other than that with which our experience furnishes us, both terms are unsuitable. In some respects Chit can be more closely described by Feeling which seems to have been the most ancient meaning of the term Chit. Feeling is more primary in that it is only after we have been first affected by something that we become conscious of it. Thus, in Sâṅkhya the Gunas are said to be in the nature of happiness (Sukha) sorrow (Dukha) and illusion (Moha) as they are experienced by the Purusha-Consciousness. And in Vedānta

Chit and Ananda or Bliss or Love are one. For consciousness then is not consciousness *of* being (Sat) but Being-consciousness (Sat Chit) not a Being which is conscious *of* Bliss (Ananda) but Being-Consciousness-bliss (Sachchhidânanda). Further "feeling" has this advantage that it is associated with all forms of organic existence even according to popular usage and may scientifically be aptly applied to inorganic matter. Thus whilst most consider it to be an unusual and strained use of language to speak of the consciousness of a plant or stone, we can and do speak of the feeling or sentiency of a plant. Further the response which inorganic matter makes to stimuli is evidence of the existence therein of that vital germ of life and sentiency (and therefore Chit) which expands into the sentiency of plants, and the feelings and emotions of animals and men. It is possible for any form of unintelligent being to feel however obscurely. And it must do so if its ultimate basis is Chit and Ananda, however vested by Mâyâ-Shakti these may be. The response which inorganic matter makes to stimuli is the manifestation of Chit through the Sattva-guna of Mâyâ-Shakti in its form as Prakriti-Shakti. The manifestation is slight and apparently mechanical because of the extreme predominance of the Tamoguna in the same Prakriti-Shakti. Because of the limited and extremely regulated character of the movement which seems to exclude all volitional process as known to us, it is currently assumed that we have merely to deal with what is an unconscious mechanical energy. Because vitality is so circumscribed and seemingly identified with the apparent mechanical process we are apt to assume mere unconscious mechanism. But as a fact this latter is but the form assumed by the conscious Vital Power which is in and works in all matter whatever it be. To the eye, however, unassisted by scientific instruments, which extend our capacity for experience, establishing artificial organs for the gaining thereof, the matter appears Jada (or unconscious); and so both in common English and Indian parlance we call that alone living or Jiva which, as organised matter, is endowed with body and senses. Philosophically, however, as well as scientifically, all is Jivâtma which is not Paramâtma: everything in fact with form, whether the form exists as the simple molecule of matter or as the combination of these simple forms into cells and greater organisms. The response of metallic matter is a form of sentiency—its germinal form—a manifestation of Chit intensely obscured by the Tamoguna of Prakriti-Shakti.

In plants Chit is less obscured and there is the sentient life which gradually expands in animals and men according as Chit gains freedom

of manifestation through the increased operation of Sattvaguna in the vehicles of Chit which vehicles are the mind and senses and the more elaborate organisation of the bodily particles. What is thus mere incipient or germinal sentiency, simulating unconscious mechanical movement in inorganic matter, expands by degrees into feeling akin, though at first remotely, to our own, and into all the other psychic functions of consciousness, perception, reasoning, memory and will. The matter has been very clearly put in a Paper on "The four cosmic elements" by C. G. Sander which, (subject to certain reservations stated) aptly describes the Indian views on the subject in hand. He rightly says that sentiency is an integrant constituent of all existence, physical as well as metaphysical, and its manifestation can be traced throughout the mineral and chemical as well as vegetable and animal worlds. It essentially comprises the functions of relationship to environment, response to stimuli, and atomic memory in the lower or inorganic plane; whilst in the higher or inorganic planes it includes all the psychic functions such as consciousness, perception, thought, reason, volition and individual memory. Inorganic matter through the inherent element of sentiency is endowed with aesthesia or capacity of feeling and response to physical and chemical stimuli such as light, temperature, sound, electricity, magnetism and the action of chemicals. All such phenomena are examples of the faculty of perception and response to outside stimuli of matter. We must here include chemical sentiency and memory; that is the atom's and molecule's remembrance of its own identity and behaviour therewith. Atomic memory does not, of course, imply self-consciousness but only inherent group-spirit which responds in a characteristic way to given outside stimuli. We may call it atomic or physical consciousness. The consciousness of plants is only trance-like (what the Hindu looks call 'Comatose') though some of the higher aspects of sentiency (and we may here use the word 'consciousness') of the vegetable world are highly interesting; such as the turning of flowers to the sun; the opening and shutting of leaves and petals at certain times, sensitiveness to the temperature and the obvious signs of consciousness shewn by the sensitive and insectivorous plants, such as the Sundew, the Venus Fly-trap, and others. The sentiency of micro-organisms which dwell on the border-land between the vegetable and animal worlds have no sense organs, but are only endowed with tactile irritability yet they are possessed of psychic life, sentiency, and inclination whereby they perceive their environment and position, approach, attack and devour food, flee from harmful su and reproduce by division



Their movements appear to be positive not reflex. Every cell both vegetable and animal possesses a biological or vegetative consciousness which in health is polarised or subordinate to the government of the total organism of which it forms an integral part ; but which is locally impaired in disease and ceases altogether at the death of the organism. In plants, however, (unlike animals) the cellular consciousness is diffused or distributed amongst the tissues or fibres ; there being apparently no special conducting or centralizing organs of consciousness such as we find in higher evolutionary forms. Animal consciousness in its highest modes becomes self-consciousness. The psychology of the lower animals is still the field of much controversy ; some regarding these as cartesian machines and others ascribing to them a high degree of psychic development. In the animals there is an endeavour at centralization of consciousness which reaches its most complex stage in man, the possessor of the most highly organised system of consciousness, consisting of the nervous system and its centres and functions such as the brain and solar plexus the site of Âjnâ and upper centres and of the Manipûra Chakra. Sentiency or feeling is a constituent of all existence. We may call it consciousness however if we understand (with the author cited) the term "consciousness" to include atomic or physical consciousness, the trance consciousness of plant life, animal consciousness and man's completed self-consciousness.

The term Sentiency or Feeling as the equivalent of manifested Chit has, however, this disadvantage :—whereas intelligence and consciousness are terms for the highest attributes of man's nature, mere sentiency, though more inclusive and common to all, is that which we share with the lowest manifestations. In the case of both terms, however, it is necessary to remember that they do not represent the Chit Svarûpa or Chit as It is in itself. The term Svarûpa corresponds with the Platonic "Idea" and Aristotelean "Form." That which constitutes anything what it is was called by Plato its "Idea." Aristotle sought to convey the same meaning by a term which the Schoolmen rendered "Form". Bacon adopted the word "Form" in this sense and the corresponding word Svarûpa (own form) is employed to convey the notion of what constitutes anything what it is namely, its true nature as it is in itself. Thus, though the Brahman or Shiva manifests in the form of the world as Mâyâ-Shakti, its Svarûpa is pure Chit.

Neither sentiency nor consciousness as known to us are Chit-varûpa. They are only limited manifestations of Chit just as reason,

will, emotion and memory, their modes, are. Chit is the back-ground of all forms of experience which are its modes that is Chit veiled by *Māyā-Shakti*. Chit-Svarūpa is never to be confounded with, or limited to, its particular modes. Nor is it their totality, for whilst it manifests in these modes It yet in Its own nature infinitely transcends them. Neither sentieney, consciousness, nor any other term borrowed from a limited and dual universe adequately describe what Chit is in Itself (Svarūpa). Vitality, mind, matter are its limited manifestations in form. These forms are ceaselessly changing but the homogeneous substratum of which they are particularised modes is changeless. That eternal, changeless, substratum is Chit, which may thus be defined as the *changeless principle of all our changing experience*. All is Chit clothing itself in forms by its own Power of Chit-Shakti and *Māyā-Shakti*: and that Power is not different from Itself. Chit is not the subject of knowledge or speech. For as the *Varāha Upanishad* (Chap. IV) says it is "The Reality which remains after all thoughts are given up." What it is in Itself is unknown but to those who become It. It is fully realised only in the highest state of Ecstasy (*Samādhi*) and in bodiless liberation (*Videha Mukti*) when Spirit is freed of its vehicles of mind and matter. A Modern Indian Philosopher has (See "Approaches to Truth" and the "Patent Wonder" by Professor Pramathanath Mukhopādhyāya) very admirably analysed the notion of the universal Ether of Consciousness (*Chidākasha*) and the particular Stress formed in it by the action of *Māyā-Shakti*. In the first place, he points out that logical thought is inherently dualistic and therefore presupposes a subject and object. Therefore to the pragmatic eye of the western, viewing the only experience known to him, consciousness is always particular having a particular form and direction. Hence where no direction or form is discernible they have been apt to imagine that consciousness as such has also ceased. Thus if it were conceded that in profound sleep there were no dreams, or if in perfect an æsthesia it were granted that nothing particular was felt, it was thereby considered to be conceded that consciousness may sometimes cease to exist in us. What does in fact cease is the consciousness of objects which we have in the waking and dreaming states. Consciousness as such is neither subjective nor objective and is not identical with intelligence or understanding—that is with directed or informed consciousness. Any form of unintelligent being which feels, however chaotically it may be, is yet, though obscurely so (in the sense here meant) conscious. Pure consciousness that is conscious such is the back ground of every form of

In practical life and in Science and Philosophy when swayed by pragmatic ends, formless experience has no interest, but only certain forms and tones of life and consciousness. Where these are missed we are apt to fancy that we miss life and feeling-consciousness also. Hence the essential *basis* of existence or Chit has been commonly looked upon as a very much specialised and peculiar manifestation in nature.

On the contrary, Chit is the one and only true Being or Reality itself. Chit as such is identical with Being as such. The Brahman is both Chit and Sat. Though in ordinary experience Being and Feeling Consciousness are essentially bound up together, they still seem to diverge from each other. Man by his very constitution inveterately believes in an objective existence beyond and independent of his self. And this is so, so long as he is subject to the veil (Māyā-Shakti). But in that ultimate basis of experience which is the Paramātmā the divergence has gone; for the same boundless substratum which is the continuous mass of experience is also that which is experienced. The self is its own object. To the exalted Yogin the whole universe is not different from himself as Âtmā. This is the path of the "upward-going" Kundalī (Urddhva Kundalinī).

Further there has been a tendency in fact to look upon consciousness as a mere function of experience; and the Philosophy of unconscious ideas and mind-stuff would even go so far as to regard it as a mere accident of mental process. This is to reverse the actual facts.

Consciousness should rather be taken as an original datum than as a later development and peculiar manifestation. We should begin with it in its lowest forms, and explain its apparent pulse-life by extending the principle of veiling (Māyā-Shakti) which is ceaselessly working in man, reducing his life to an apparent series of pulses also. An explanation which does not start with this primordial extensivity of experience cannot expect to end with it. For if it be not positive at the beginning, it cannot be derived at the end.

But what, it may be asked, is the proof of such pure experience? Psychology which only knows changing states does not tell us of it. This is so. Yet from those states some of which approach homogeneity inferences may be drawn; and experience is not limited to such states for it may transcend them.

It is true that ordinarily we do not meet with a condition of consciousness which is without a direction or form, but tests drawn from

the accidents of ordinary normal life are insufficient he has argued, to prove that there is no consciousness at all when this direction and form are supposed to have gone. Though a logical intuition will not tell its own story, we can make reflection on intuition render us some sort of account, so that the intuitive fact appears in review, when it will appear that consciousness is the basis of, indeed existence itself, and not merely an attendant circumstance. But the only proof of pure consciousness is an instance of it. This cannot be established by mere reflection. The bare consciousness of this or that, the experience of just going to sleep and just waking, and even the consciousness of being as such, are but approximations to the state of consciousness as such that is pure consciousness, but are not identical with it. Then, what evidence, it may be asked, have we of the fact that pure consciousness is an actual state of existence? In normal life as well as in abnormal pathological states, we have occasional stretches of experience in which simplicity of feature or determination has advanced near to homogeneity, in which experience has become almost structureless. But the limit of pure homogenous experience is not there reached. On the other hand, there is no conclusive proof that we have ever had a real lapse of consciousness in our life, and the extinction of consciousness as such is inconceivable in any case. The claim, however, that consciousness as such exists rests not so much on logical argument as on intuitive grounds, on revelation (Shruti) and spiritual *experience* of the truth of that revelation.

According to Indian Monism, a Pure Principle of Experience not only exists, but is the one and only ultimate permanent existence or reality. It does not regard Chit as a mere function, accident, or epiphenomenon, but holds it to be the ever existing *plenum* which sustains and vitalises all phenomenal existence, and is the very *basis* on which all forms of multiple experience, whether of sensation, instinct, will, understanding, or reason rest. It is, in short, the unity and unchanging Reality behind all these various changing forms which, by the veil or *Māyā-Shakti*, *Jiva* assumes.

The Chit-Svarūpa inadequately described as mere blissful awareness of feeling exists as the basis and appears in the form of, that is clothed with, mind; a term which in its general sense is not used merely in the sense of the purely mental function of reason but in the sense of all the forms in which consciousness is displayed as distinguished from Chit Itself which is the unity behind all these forms whether reason,

sensation emotion instinct or will All these are modes wherein the plastic unformed clay of life is determined For every conception or volition is essentially an apparent circumscription or limitation of that Sat which is the basis of phenomenal life.

Professor P. N. Mukhopādhyāya has described pure consciousness to be an infinitude of "awareness", lacking name and form and every kind of determination, which is a state of complete quiescence where the potential is zero or infinity—a condition without strain or tension which is at once introduced when the slightest construction is put upon it, resulting in a consciousness of bare "this" and "that". It is not a consciousness of anything. It is an experience of nothing *in particular*. But this must not be confounded with *no* experience. The former is taken to be the latter because life is pragmatic, interest being shown in particular modes of awareness. To man's life, which is little else than a system of partialities, pure experience in which there is nothing to observe or shun, love or hate seems practically to be no experience at all. Pure Consciousness is impartial. There is no difference (Bheda) so far as pure Awareness is concerned. Pure Consciousness is a kind of experience which stands above all antithesis of motion and rest. It does not know Itself either as changing or statical, since it is awareness *as such* without any determinations or mode whatever. To know itself as changing or permanent, it must conceal its alogical and unspeakable nature in a veil. (Mâyâ). Every determination or form makes experience a directive magnitude. Consciousness then assumes a direction or special reference. It is not possible to direct and refer in a special way without inducing such a feeling of strain or tension, whether the conditions be physiological or psychological. Pure consciousness has, thus, been compared to an equipotential surface of electrical distribution. There is no difference of potentials between any two points A and B over this surface. It is a stretch of consciousness in which there is, apparently, no sensible diversity of features, no preference, no differential incidence of subjective regard. Like the equipotential surface, such consciousness is also quiescent. To secure a flow on it, there must be a difference of potentials between any two points. Similarly, to have a reference, a direction, a movement of attention, there must be a determination in the total experience of the moment in the given mass of consciousness. Absolute quiescence is a state of consciousness which is pure existence, with no special subjective direction, and reference with no difference of level and potential between one part of the experience and another Experience will show special

subjective direction and reference if it assumes the least form or determination, such as "this" or "that"; to have no difference of level or potential, experience must be strictly homogeneous—that is to say, must not involve the least ideal or representative structure. Absolute quiescence exists only with that Consciousness which is pure Being, or Paramâtmâ.

With regard however, to all descriptions of the state, it must be borne in mind that they only negatively correspond with their subject matter by the elimination of characteristics which are peculiar to, and constitute the human consciousness of, the Jiva, and are therefore alien to the Supreme Consciousness. They give us no positive information as to the nature of pure Chit, for this is only known in Yoga by the removal of the veil of ignorance (Avidyâ) under which all logical thinking and speaking is done. This "ignorance" is nothing but a term for those limitations which make the creature what he is. It is a common place in Indian religion and philosophy that the Brahman as It exists in Itself is beyond all thought and words, and is known only by the Samâdhi of Yoga. As the Mahâ-Nirvâna Tantra says (III., V. 6 *et. seq.*): "The Brahman is known in two ways: from His manifestations which are the object of Sâdhanâ or as It is in itself in Samâdhiyoga": for, as Ch. XIV., V. 135 *Ibid.*, says, Âtmâjnâna is the one means of liberation in which Its nature is realised. It is, perhaps, in part at least, because the merely negative and imperfect character of such description is not sufficiently noted that pure consciousness, as the author cited points out, has in general awakened no serious interest in the practical West; though it has been the crown of glory for some of, what have been said to be, the stateliest forms of Eastern thought, which asserts itself to be in possession of an *experimental* method by which the condition of pure consciousness may be realised. The question is, thus, not one of mere speculation, but of *demonstration*. This state, again, is believed by the East to be not a dull and dreary condition, a dry abstraction or *reductio ad absurdum* of all which imparts to our living its worth and significance. Not at all; since It is the first principle from which all existence and interest in existence proceeds. It is reasonable, therefore, it is contended, to assume that all which life possesses of real worth exists in the Source of life itself. Life is only a *mode* of infinite existence, and the joy of life is but a faint reflection of infinite beatitude, which is pure Being and Consciousness in all its metaphysical grandeur, an absolutely ununderstandable condition which no imagination can depict and no categories can reach and possess.

Owing to the necessarily negative character of some of the descriptions of the Supreme Brahman we find such questions "How can it differ from a nullity?" ("Dialogues on Hindu Philosophy," 259 by Rev. K. M. Banerjee): and the statement of the English Orientalist Colonel Jacob (whose views are akin to those of others) that Nirvāna is an unconscious (*sic*) and stone-like (*sic*) existence". Such a misconception is the more extraordinary in that it occurs in the work of an author who was engaged in the translation of a Vedantic treatise. These and many similar statements seem to establish that it is possible to make a special study of Vedānta and yet to misunderstand its primary concepts. It is true that the Brahman is unconscious in the sense that It has not our consciousness; for if so, It would be Jiva and not Paramātamā. But this is only to say that it has not our limitations. It is unlimited Chit. A stone represents its most veiled existence. In its Self it is all light and self-illumining (Svaprakāsha). As Shruti says (Katha Up. 5-15). "All things shed lustre by His lustre. All things shine because He shines." All things depend on It: but It has not to depend on any thing else for Its manifestation. It is therefore better to say with the Haṅga Upanishad and the Christian Gospel that It is the peace beyond all understanding. It has been drily remarked that "The idea that Yoga means a dull state is due, perhaps, to the misunderstanding of Patanjali's definition of it."

Man, however, ordinarily and by his nature craves for modes and forms (Bhaumānanda); and though all enjoyment comes from the pure Supreme Consciousness, it is supposed that dualistic variety and polarity are necessary for enjoyment. What, thus, in its plenitude belongs to the sustaining spirit of all life is transferred to life alone. All knowledge and existence are identified with variety, change, polarity. Whilst skimming over the chequered surface of the sea, we thus, it is said, ignore the unfathomed depths which are in repose and which nothing stirs, wherein is the Supreme Peace (Shāntā) and Bliss (Paramānanda).

The Brihadāranyaka Upanishad says "Other beings live on a fraction of this great Bliss." The Bliss of Shiva and Shakti are one for they are inseparate. Hence she is called (Trishati II. 32) Ekabhogā: for Eka=īshvara and Bhoga=Svasvarūpānanda.

Nyāya and Sāṅkhya say that the chief end of man is the absolute cessation of pain, but Vedantins, going beyond this negative definition, say that, all pain having surceased on unity with the Supreme, the chief end is that positive Bliss which is of its ce. The Devi

Kalyānt, the Mother of all, is Herself Bliss—that is, all bliss from earthly bliss (Bhaumānanda) to Brahman-bliss (Brahmānanda). As the Commentator Shankara in his commentary on the Trishatī says (citing Shruti): “Who else can make us breathe, who else can make us live, if this blissful Ether were not?”

If, further, it be asked *what* is this pure Experience which manifests itself in all these diverse forms, it must be said that from Its very definition pure Chit or the Supreme Brahman (Parabrahman) is that about which nothing in particular can be predicated: for predication is possible only in relation to *determinations* or modes in consciousness. And in this sense the Yogatattva Upanishad says that those who seek a knowledge of it in Shāstras are deluded: “How can that which is self-shining be illuminated by the Shāstras? Not even the Devas can describe that indescribable state.” The Mandukya Upanishad, speaking of the fourth aspect (Pāda) of Ātmā, says that it is the non-dual Shiva which is not an object which can be sensed, used, taken, determined (by any marks) or of which an account can be given, but is unthinkable and knowable only by the realisation of Ātmā. Negative predication may, however, clear away improper notions. It is really an inscrutable condition of existence upon which no category can be fastened. This must always be borne in mind in any attempted definition of this transcendent state. It is a condition of self-existent (Nirādhāra), unending (Nitya), changeless (Āvikāri), undifferentiated (Abhinna), spaceless (Pāma), timeless (Shāsvata), all-pervading (Sarvatrāvastha), self-illuminating (Svayamjyotiḥ), pure (Shuddha) experience. As the Kulārṇava Tantra says (I—6, 7): “Shiva is the impartite Supreme Brahman, the all-knowing Creator of all. He is the stainless One and the Lord of all. He is one without a second (Advaya). He is light itself. He changes not, and is without beginning or end. He is without attribute and above the highest. He is existence (Sat), Consciousness (Chit), and Bliss (Ānanda).” As Sat It is unity of being beyond the opposites of “this” and “that”, “here and there”, “then and now”. As Chit It is an experiencing beyond the opposites of worldly knowledge and ignorance. As Supreme Ānanda It is the Bliss which is known upon the dissolution of that dualistic state which fluctuates between, and is composed of, happiness and sorrow; for created happiness is only an impermanent change of state (Vikāra) or Becoming, but the Supreme Bliss (Paramānanda) endures. Bliss is the very nature (Svarūpa) of this Supreme Consciousness, and not, as with the creature, a mere changing attribute of some form of Becoming. Supreme Being (Sat)



is a unity without parts (Nishkala). Supreme Feeling-Consciousness (Chit) is immediacy of experience. In the Jiva, Consciousness of Self is set over against the not-self; for logical thought establishes a polarity of subject and object. Thus the undifferentiated Supreme Consciousness transcends, and the Supreme Bliss (Paramānanda) is beyond, the changing feelings of happiness and sorrow. It is the great Peace (Shānta) which, in the words of the Haṅgopaniṣad. (V. 12, Ed. Ānandāshrama, XXIX., p. 593) as of the New Testament, passes all worldly understanding. Sachchidānanda, or Pure Being, persists in all the states of Becoming which are its manifestation as Shakti. It is a continuous, partless, homogeneous Unity universally pervading the manifested world like ether or space, as opposed to the limited, discontinuous, discrete character of the forms of "matter" which are the products of its power or Shakti. It is a state of quiescence free of all motion (Nihspanda), and of that vibration (Spandana) which, operating as the Primordial Energy, evolves the phenomenal world of names and forms. It is, in short, the innermost Self in every being—a changeless Reality of the nature of a purely experiencing principle (Chaitanyam Ātmā) as distinguished from whatever may assume the form of either the experienced or of the means of experience. This Chit in bodies or Chaitanya underlies as their innermost Self all beings. The Chit or Ātmā as the underlying Reality in all is, according to Vedānta, one, and the same in all: undivided and unlimited by any of them, however much they may be separated in time and space. It is not only all-pervading, but all-transcending. It has thus a two-fold aspect: an immanent aspect as Shakti (Power), in which It pervades the universes (Saguna Brahman); and a transcendental aspect, in which It exists beyond all Its worldly, manifestations. (Nirguna Brahman). Chit as it is in itself is spaceless and timeless, extending beyond all limitations of time and space and all other categories of existence. We live *in* the Infinite. All limits exist *in* Chit. But these limits are also another aspect of Himself that is Shakti. It is a boundless tranquil ocean on the surface of which countless varied modes like waves are rising, tossing, and sinking. Though It is the one Cause of the universe of relations, in itself It is neither a relation nor a totality of relations, but a completely relationless Self-identity unknowable by any logical process whatever.

Chit is the boundless permanent *plenum* which sustains and vitalises everything. It is the universal Spirit all-pervading like the Ether which is, sustains, and illumines all experience and all process in the

*continuum* of experience. In it the universe is born, grows and dies. This *plenum* or *continuum* is as such all-pervading, eternal, unproduced and indestructible. For production and destruction involve the existence and bringing together and separation of parts which in an absolute partless *continuum* is impossible. It is necessarily in itself that is, as Chit, motionless, for no parts of an all-filling *continuum* can move from one place to another. Nor can such a *continuum* have any other form of motion, such as expansion, contraction, or undulation, since all these phenomena involve the existence of parts and their displacement. Chit is one homogeneous, partless, all-pervading, eternal, spiritual substance. In Sanskrit, this *plenum* is called Chidākāsha; that is, just as all material things exist in the all-prevailing physical Ether, so do they and the latter exist in the infinitely extending Spiritual "Ether" which is Chit. The Supreme Consciousness is thought of as a kind of permanent spiritual "Space" (Chidākāsha) which makes room for and contains all varieties and forms appearing and disappearing. Space itself is an aspect of spiritual substance. It is a special posture of that stress in life which takes place in unchanging consciousness (P. Mukhopādhyāya "The Patent Wonder," 21—24). In this Ocean of Being-Consciousness we live, move and have our being. Consciousness as such, (that is, as distinguished from the products of Its power or Shakti), is never finite. Like space, it cannot be limited, though through the operation of its power of self-negation or Mâyâ-Shakti it may appear as determined. But such apparent determinations do not ever for us express or exhaust the whole consciousness, any more than space is exhausted by the objects in it. Experience is taken to be limited because the Experiencer is swayed by a pragmatic interest which draws his attention only to particular features in the *continuum*. Though what is thus experienced is a part of the whole experience, the latter is felt to be an infinite expanse of consciousness or awareness in which is distinguished a definite mass of especially determined feeling.

As Chit is the infinite *plenum*, all limited being exists *in* it, and it exists in all such beings as the Spirit or innermost and true Self and as Shakti it is their mind and body. When the existence of anything is affirmed, the Brahman is affirmed, for the Brahman is existence itself. This pure Consciousness, or Chit is the Paramātmā Nirguna Shiva who is Being-Consciousness-Bliss (Sachchidananda). Consciousness is Being. Paramātmā, according to Advaita Vedānta, is not a consciousness of being, but Being-Consciousness. Nor it is a consciousness of Bliss, but it is Bliss. All these are one in pure Consciousness. That

which is the nature of Paramâtmâ never changes, notwithstanding the creative ideation (Srishalpana) which is the manifestation of Shakti as Chit-Shakti and and Mâyâ-Shakti. It is this latter Shakti which according to the Shâkta Tantra, evolves. To adopt a European analogy which is yet not complete, Paramâtmâ is God-head (Brahmatva) Shakti, or Saguna Âtmâ, is God (Īshvara). Each of the three systems Sâṅkhya, Mâyāvâda, Vedânta, and Tantrik monism agrees in holding the reality of pure consciousness (Chit). The question upon which they differ is as to whether unconsciousness is a second independent reality, as Sâṅkhya alleges; and, if not, how the admitted appearance of unconsciousness is to be explained consistently with the unity of the Brahman.

Such then is Chit, truly known as it is in Itself only in Yoga and Moksha; known only through Its manifestations in our ordinary experience just as to use the simile of the Kaivalya Kâlikâ Tantra we realise the presence of Rahu or Bhûchehhâyâ by his actions on the sun and moon. The Eclipse is seen but not the cause of it. Chit-Shakti is a name for the same changeless Chit when associated in creation with its operating Mâyâ-Shakti. The Supreme Chit is called Parâsamvit in the scheme of the Thirty-six Tattvas which is adopted by both the Shaiva and Shâkta Âgamas.

According to Shankara, the Supreme Brahman is defined as pure Jñâna without the slightest trace of either actual or potential objectivity. The Advaita Shaiva-Shaktas regard this matter differently in accordance with an essential principle of the Âgamic School with which I now deal.

All occultism whether of East or West posits the principle that there is nothing in any one state or plane which is not in some other way actual or potential, in another state or plane. The Western Hermetic maxim runs "As above so below." This is not always understood. The saying does not mean that what exists in one plane exists *in that form* in another plane. Obviously if it did the planes would be the same and not different. If Īshvara thought and felt and saw objects, in the human way, and if he was loving and wrathful, just as men are, He would not be Īshvara but Jiva. The saying cited means that a thing which exists on one plane exists on all other planes according either to the form of each plane if it be an intermediate causal body (Kârânâvântarasharīra) or ultimately as the mere potentiality of becoming

which exist in Ātmā in its aspect as Shakti. The Hermetic maxim is given in another form in the Vishvasāra Tantra what is here is elsewhere. What is not here is no where." (Yad ihāsti tad anyatra Yannehāsti natat kvachit). Similarly the northern Shaiva Shāstra says that what appears *without* only so appears *because* it exists *within*. One can only take out of a bag what is first assumed to be within it. What is in us must in some form be in our cause. If we are living finite forms it is because that cause is infinite Being. If we have limited knowledge it is because our essential substance is Chit the Illuminator. If we have bliss (though united with sorrow,) it is because It is Supreme bliss. In short our experience must exist in germ in It. This is because in the Shākta Āgama, there is a real creation and, therefore, a real nexus between the Brahman as cause and the world as effect. According to Shangkarā, there is not in any real sense any such nexus. The notion of creation by Brahman is as much Māyā as the notion of the world created.

Applying these principles we find in our dual experience an "I" (Aham or subject) which experiences as object a "This" (Idam) : that is the universe or any particular object of the collectivity which compose it. Now it is said that the duality of "I" and "This" come from the One which is in its essential nature (Svarūpa) an unitary experience without such conscious distinction. For Vedānta whether in its Māyāvāda or Shākta form agree in holding that in the Supreme there is no consciousness of objects such as exists on this plane. The Supreme does not see objects outside Itself for it is the whole and the experience of the whole. It is Pūrṇa. How then, it may be asked, can a Supreme, unchanging, partless formless Consciousness produce from Itself something which is so different from Itself, something which is changing, with parts, form and so forth. Shangkarā's answer is that really, that is transcendently, it does not produce anything. The notion that it does is Māyā. What then is his Māyā ? This I have more fully explained in my papers on "Māyā-Shakti" and on "Māyā and Shakti". I will only here say that his Māyā is an unexplainable (anirvachanīya) principle of unconsciousness which is not real, not unreal, and not partly either ; which is an eternal falsity (mithya bhūtasatātani) which though not Brahman is inseparably associated with It in Its aspect as Ishvara ; which Māyā has Brahman for its support (Mayābrahmāśrutā) ; from which support it draws an appearance of reality which in truth it does not possess. The Parabrahman aspect of the One is not associated with Māyā.

According to the Shākta Tantrik exposition of Advaitavāda, Māyā is not an unconscious (jada) principle but a particular Shakti of Brahman. Being Shakti it is at base consciousness but as Māyā-Shakti it is Consciousness veiling Itself. Shakti and Shaktimān are one and the same : that is, Power and its Possessor (Shaktimān). Therefore Māyā-Shakti is Shiva or Chit in that particular aspect which He assumes as the material cause (Upādāna Kāraṇa) in creation. Creation is real ; that is there is a direct causal nexus between Shiva as Shakti (Chitshakti and Māyāshakti) and the universe. In short Shiva as Shakti is the cause of the universe and as Shakti in the form of Jīva (all manifested forms) He actually evolves. Comparing these two views ;—Shankara says that there is in truth no creation and therefore there can be no question how it arose. This is because he views the problem from the transcendental (Paramārthika) standpoint of Siddhi. The Tantra Shāstra, on the other hand, being a practical Sādhana Shāstra views the matter from our, that is the Jīva, standpoint. To us the universe and ourselves are real. And Ishvara the Creator is real. Therefore there is a creation and Shiva as Shakti creates by evolving into the Universe and then appearing as all Jīvas. This is the old Upanishadic doctrine of the spider actually evolving the web from itself the web being its substance in that form. A flower cannot be raised from seed unless the flower was in some way already there. Therefore as there is an "Aham" and "Idam" in our experience, in some way it is in the supreme experience of Parashiva or Parāsamvit. But the Idam is not there as with us ; otherwise It would be Jīva. Therefore it is said that there are two principles or aspects in the Brahman namely Prakāsha (or Chit aspect) and Vimarsha Shakti the potential Idam which in creation explicates into the Universe. But in the supreme experience or Āmarsha, Vimarsha-Shakti (which has two states) exists in its supreme form. The subtler state is in the form of consciousness (Chidrūpī); the gross state is in the form of the Universe. (Vishvātmikā). The former is beyond the universe (Vishvottirṇā). But if Vimarsha Shakti is there in the form of consciousness (Chidrūpī) it is one with Chit. Therefore it is said that the Aham and Idam without ceasing to be in the supreme experience are in supreme Shiva in undistinguishable union as Chit and Chidrūpī. This is the Nirguna state of Shivashakti. As She is then in undistinguishable union with Shiva She is then also simple unmanifested Chit. She is then Chaitanyarūpā or Chidrūpī : a subtle sanskrit expression which denotes that She is the same as Chit and yet suggest that though in a

present sense She is one with Him She is yet in a sense (with reference to His potentiality of future manifestation) different from Him. She is Sachchidānandamayī and He is Sachchidānanda. She is then the unmanifested universe in the form of undifferentiated Chit. The mutual relation whether in manifestation or beyond it, whether as the imperfect or Ideal universe is one of inseparable connection or inherence, (Avinabhāva Sambandha, Samanvaya) such as that between "I-ness" (Ahantā) and "I" (Aham), existence and that which exists (Bhāva, Bhavat), an attribute and that in which it inheres (Dharma, Dharmin), sunshine and the sun and so forth. The Pancharātra School of the Vaishnava Āgama or Tantra speaking of the Mahāshakti Lakshmi says, that in Her supreme state She is undistinguishable from the "Windless Atmosphere (Vāsudeva) existing only as it were in the form of "darkness" and "emptiness" (that is of unmanifested formlessness). So the Mahānirvāna Tantra speaks of Her "dark formlessness". In the Kulachūdāmani Nigama Devi says (I. 16-24)—"I though in the form of Prakriti rest in consciousness bliss" (Ahang prakritirūpā chet chidānanda parayanā). Rāghava Bhatta in his commentary on the Shāradā Tilaka (Ch. I) says "She who is eternal existed in a subtle (that is, unmanifested) state as it were Chaitanya during the final dissolution (Ya anādirūpā chaitanyā-dhyāsenā mahāpralaye sūkṣmā sthitā). It would be simpler to say that She is then what She is (Svarūpa) namely consciousness but in creation that consciousness veils itself. These terms "formless", "subtle", "dark", "empty" all denote the same unmanifested state in which Shakti is in undistinguishable union with Shiva the formless consciousness. The Pancharātra (Ahirbudhnya Samhitā, Ch. IV) in manner similar to that of the other Āgamas describes the supreme state of Shakti in the dissolution of the Universe as one in which manifested Shakti "returns to the condition of Brahman (Brahmabhāvam brajate). "Owing to complete intensity of embrace" (Atisangkleshāt) the two all pervading ones Nārāyaṇa and His Shakti become as it were a single principle (Ekam tattvam iva). This return to the Brahman condition is said to take place in the same way as a conflagration when there is no more combustible matter, returns to the latent condition of fire (Vahni-bhāva). There is the same fire in both cases but in one case there is the activity of combustion and in the other there is not. It follows from this that the Supreme Brahman is not a mere knowing without trace of objectivity. In It the Aham is the Self as Chit and the Idam is the Self as Chidrūpini. There is Ātmārāma in

which the Self knows and enjoys the Self not in the form of external objects but as that aspect of consciousness whose projection all objects are. Shakti is always the object of the self and one with it. For the object is always the self since there is nothing but the self. But in the supreme the object is experience as one in nature with Shiva being Chaitanya-rûpa; in the universe the object seems to the Jiva, the creation of and subject to Mâyâ and Avidyâ Shakti, to be different from the Self as mind and matter.

The next point is the nature of creation or rather emanation (Abhâsa) for the former term is associated with dualistic notions of an extra-Cosmic God who produces a world which is as separate from Himself as is the pot from the potter. According to this doctrine there is an Evolution of Consciousness or Chit-Shakti associated with Mâyâ-Shakti into certain forms. This is not to say that the Brahman is wholly transformed into its emanations that is exhausted by them. The Brahman is infinite and can never, therefore, be wholly held in this sense in any form or in the universe as a whole. It always transcends the universe. Therefore when Consciousness evolves, it nevertheless does not cease to be what it was, is, and will be. The Supreme Chit becomes as Shakti the universe but still remains supreme Chit. In the same way every stage of the emanation-process prior to the real evolution (Parinâma of Prakriti) remains what it is whilst giving birth to a new Evolution. In Parinâma or Evolution as known to us on this plane, when one thing is evolved into another it ceases to be what it was. Thus when milk is changed into curd, it ceases to be milk. The Evolution from Shiva-Shakti of the Pure Tattvas is not of this kind. It is an Abhâsa or "shining forth", adopting the simile of the sun which shines without (it was supposed) change in, or diminution of, its light. This unaffectedness in spite of its being the material cause is called in the Pancharâtra by the term Vîryya a condition which, the Vaishnava Lakshmi Tantra says, is not found in the world "where milk quickly loses its nature when curds appear". It is a process in which one flame springs from another flame. Hence it is called "Flame to Flame." There is a second Flame but the first from which it comes is unexhausted and still there. The cause remains what it was and yet appears differently in the effect. God is never "emptied" as it is said wholly into the world. Brahman is ever changeless in one aspect; in another it changes, such change being as it were a mere point of stress in the infinite Ether of Chit. This Abhâsa, therefore, is a form of Vivartta  
 ble however from the Vivartta of Mâyâvâda

because in the Āgama, whether Vaishnava, Shaiva, or Shākta, the effect is regarded as real whereas according to Shangkara, it is unreal. Hence the latter system is called Sat-kāraṇa-vāda or the doctrine of the reality of the original source or basis of things and not also of the apparent effects of the cause. This Ābhāsa has been called Sadriśha Parināma (Introduction to Principles of Tantra, Vol. II) a term borrowed from the Sāṅkhya but which is not altogether appropriate. In the latter Philosophy the term is used in connection with the state of the Gunas of Prakṛiti in dissolution when nothing is produced. Here on the contrary we are dealing with creation and an evolving Power-Consciousness. It is only appropriate to this extent that as in Sadriśha Parināma there is no real evolution or objectivity, so also there is none in the evolution of the tattvas until Māyā intervenes and Prakṛiti really evolves the objective universe.

This being the nature of the Supreme Shiva and of the evolution of consciousness, this doctrine assumes, with all others, a transcendent and a creative or immanent aspect of Brahman. The first is Niskhala Shiva; the second Sakala Shiva; or Nirguna, Saguna; Parama, Apra (in Shangkara's parlance); Paramātma, Ishvara; and Paramabrahman, Shabdabrahman. From the second or changing aspect the universe is born. Birth means 'manifestation'. Manifestation to what? The answer is to consciousness. But there is nothing but Chit. Creation is then the evolution whereby the changeless Chit through the power of its Māyā-Shakti appears to Itself in the form of object. All is Shiva whether as subject or object.

This evolution of consciousness is described in the scheme of the Thirty-six Tattvas.

Shangkara and Sāṅkhya speak of the 24 Tattvas from Prakṛiti to Prithivi. Both Shaivas and Shāktas speak of the Thirty-six Tattvas, shewing by the extra number of Tattvas how Puruṣa and Prakṛiti themselves originated. The northern or Advaita Shaiva Āgama and the Shāktas Āgama are allied, though all Shaiva Scripture adopt the same Tattvas. In all the Āgamas whether Vaishnava, Shaiva, or Shākta, there are points of doctrine which are the same or similar. The Vaishnava Pancharātra, however, moves in a different sphere of thought and its expression. It speaks in lieu of the Ābhāsa here described of four Vyūha or forms of Nārāyaṇa, viz., Vāsudeva, Saṅkarāṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. The Thirty-six Tattvas are the 24 from Prithivi to Prakṛiti together with (proceeding upwards) Puruṣa, Māyā and the



SHIVATATTVA  
UNMANI SHAKTI

SHAKTITATTVA  
SAMANI SHAKTI

MANTRAMAHESHVARA

AHAM IDAM

SADAKHYA TATTVA  
NADA SHAKTI.

MANTRASHVARA

AHAM IDAM

ISHVARA TATTVA  
BINDU SHAKTI

MANTRAS &  
EIGHT VIDYESHVARAS

AHAM IDAM

SADVIDYATATTVA

VIJNANAKALA  
BELOW SADVIDYA  
& ABOVE MAYA  
PRALAYAKALA  
IN MAYA

HERE MAYA & THE KANCHUKAS  
INTERVENE TO PRODUCE.

AHAM

PURUSHATATTVA

PRANRITITATTVA

IDAM

AKALA ALL  
THINGS FROM  
MAYA DOWNWARDS  
IS ARE NOT MUKTA

THE TATTVAS FROM



five Kanchukas (Kālā, Kāla, Niyati, Vidyā, Rāga) Shuddhavidyā (or Sadvidyā), Ishvara, Sadākhyā (or Sadāshiva), Shakti, Shiva. These are divided into three groups signified by the terms Shiva Tattva, Vidyā Tattva, Ātmā Tattva, common in the ritual. Shiva Tattva is the Tattvas from and including Shiva Tattva to Shuddhavidyā. These are known as the Pure Tattvas (Shuddha-Tattva). They are the Tattvas of the pure universe of Consciousness because they precede Māyā-Shakti and all dualities. Vidyā Tattva includes Māyā, the five Kanchukas and Purusha. These are the pure-impure Tattvas (Shuddha-shuddha) because they stand midway between the first and the last. Ātmā Tattva is the impure Tattvas (Ashuddha tattva) of the world of duality namely the 24 Tattvas from Prakriti to Prithivi.

It is common doctrine of Advaitavāda that the One is of dual aspect; the first static (Shiva) and the other kinetic (Shakti). This doctrine of aspects is a device whereby it is sought to reconcile the fact that there is changelessness and change. Philosophically it is an evasion of the problem and not a solution. The solution is to be found in revelation (Veda) and in direct Spiritual Experience (Samādhi). These states vary in different men and in different races and creeds. But in support of Advaitavāda reliance may be placed on the fact that Samādhi or ecstasy in all parts of the world and in all faiths *tends* towards some kind of unity, more or less complete. Pure Advaitavāda is complete unity. The scheme now outlined shows how that unitary experience, without ceasing to be what it is, assumes limited forms.

The reader is referred to the diagram. Personally I always work with diagrams. I do not think a subject is understood until it can be represented (so far, of course, as in such matters it is possible) by diagram.

Parashiva shown on the left of the Diagram is Nishkala Shiva or the changeless Brahman aspect; and Shiva-Shakti is the aspect from which change comes and which is its products or changing forms. Both are Shiva-Shakti. When, however, Shiva is kinetic He is called Shakti. Regarding the matter from the Shakti aspect both are Shakti. Neither ever exist without the other though Shakti is in one aspect, Chidrūpini, and in the other in the form of the Universe (Vishvātmikā). In themselves and throughout they are one. The divergence takes place in consciousness after it has been subjected to the operation of Māyā, the effect of which is to polarize consciousness into an apparently separate 'I' and 'This' Parāsamvit is not accounted a Tattva, for It is beyond

all Tattvas (Tattvātita). Shiva Tattva and Shakti Tattva are counted separate though Shakti Tattva is merely the negative aspect of Shiva Tattva. Shiva Tattva and Shakti Tattva are not produced. They thus are even in dissolution. They are Saguna-Brahman ; and Parāsamvit is the Nirguna-Brahman. The first evolved Tattva is Sadāshiva or Sadākhyā Tattva of which the meaning is Sat ākhyā yataḥ or that state in which there is the first notion of Being ; for here is the first incipency of the world-experience as the notion "I am this" which ultimately becomes a separate "I" and "This". In my "Studies in the Mantra-Shāstra" I have with more technical detail described the evolution of Jīva consciousness. Here I will only shortly summarise the process.

As already stated, the Aham and Idam exist in an unitary state which is indescribable in Parāsamvit. Shakti Tattva is called negative because negation is the function of Shakti (Nishedha-vyapāra-rūpā Shaktih). Negation of what ? The answer is negation of consciousness. The universe is thus a product of negation. Where there is pure experience there is no manifested universe. Shakti negates the pure experience or consciousness to the extent that it appears to itself limited. Shakti disengages the unified elements (Aham and Idam) which are latent in the Supreme Experience as an undistinguishable unity. How ? The answer is one of great subtlety.

Of the Shiva-Shakti Tattvas, Shiva represents the Prakāsha and Shakti the Vimarsha aspect which contains potentially within it the seed of the Universe to be. The result is that the Prakāsha aspect is left standing alone. The Shiva-tattva is Prakāsha-mātra that is, to use the imagery of our plane, an "I" without a "This". This a state in which the unitary consciousness is broken up to this extent that it is no longer a Perfect Experience in which the Aham and Idam exist in undistinguishable union but there is one Supreme Aham Consciousness only which is the root of all limited subjectivity. To this Aham or Shiva Tattva, Shakti gradually unveils Herself as the Idam or Vimarsha aspect of consciousness. The result is that from Shiva and Shakti (in which the latter takes the playful part) there is evolved the first produced consciousness called Sadākhyā Tattva. There is then an Aham and Idam aspect of experience. But that experience is not like the Jīva's which arises at a later stage after the intervention of Māyā-Shakti. In the Jīva co (Jivātma) the object (Idam) is seen

and all the subsequent pure Tattvas that is Ishvara Tattva and Shuddhavidyā Tattva the 'This' is experienced as part of the Self and not as separate from it. There is as will appear from the Diagram no outer and inner. The circle which represents the one Consciousness is divided into "I" and "This" which are yet parts of the same figure. The "This" is at first only by degrees and hazily (Dhyāmala prāyam) presented to the Aham like a picture just forming itself (unmilita-mātrā chitrā-kalpam). For this reason it is said that there is emphasis on the Aham which is indicated in the diagram by the arrow-head. This is called the "Nimesha" or "closing of the eyes" of Shakti. It is so called because it is the last stage in dissolution before all effects are withdrawn into their first cause. Being the last stage in dissolution it is the first in creation. Then the Idam side becomes clear in the next evolved Ishvara Tattva in which the emphasis is therefore said to be on the "This" which the Aham subjectifies. This is the "Unmesha" or "opening of the eyes" state of Shakti ; for this is the state of consciousness when it is first fully equipped to create and does so. The result again of this is the evolved consciousness called Shuddhavidyā Tattva in which the emphasis is equal on the "I" and "This." Consciousness is now in the state in which the two halves of experience are ready to be broken up and experienced separately. It is at this state that Māyā-Shakti intervenes and does so through its power and the Kanchukas which are forms of it. Māyā-Shakti is thus defined as the sense of difference (Bhedabuddhi) : that is the power by which things are seen as different from the Self in the dual manifested world. The Kanchukas which are evolved from, and are particular forms of, the operation of Māyā are limitations of the natural perfections of the Supreme Consciousness. These are Kālā which produce division (Parichchheda) in the partless and unlimited; Niyati which affects independence (Svatantratā); Rāga which produces interest in, and then attachment to, objects in that which wanted nothing (Pārna); Vidyā which makes the Purusha a "little knower" in lieu of being all-knower (Sarvajñatā) and Kālā which makes Purusha a "little doer", whereas the Supreme was in its Kartritva almighty. The result of Māyā and its offshoots which are the Kanchukas is the production of the Purusha and Prakriti Tattvas. At this stage the Aham and Idam are completely severed. Each consciousness regards itself as a separate 'I' looking upon the "This" whether its own body or that of others as outside its consciousness. Each Purusha (and they are numberless) is mutually exclusive the one of the other Prakriti is the collectivity of all Shaktis in co (Sanghu

chadrûpâ) undifferentiated form. She is Feeling in the form of the undifferentiated mass of Buddhi and the rest and of the three Gunas in equilibrium. The Purusha or Self experiences Her as object. Then on the disturbance of the Gunas in Prakriti the latter evolves the Vikritis of mind and matter. The Purusha at this stage has experience of the multiple world of the twenty-four impure Tattvas.

Thus from the supreme "I" (Parahantâ) which is the creative Shiva-Shakti aspect of Parâsamvit which changelessly endures as Sachchidananda, Consciousness experiences Itself as object (Sadâkhyâ, Ishvara, Sadvidyâ Tattvas) and then through Mâyâ and the limitations or contractions which are the Kanchukas or Samkoochas it loses the knowledge that it is itself its own object. It sees the "other"; and the one Consciousness becomes the experiencers which are the multiple selves and their objects of the limited and dual universe. Shakti who in Herself (Svarûpa) is Feeling-Consciousness (Chidrûpinî) becomes more and more gross until physical energy assumes the form and becomes embedded in the "crust" of matter vitalised by Herself as the Life-Principle of all things. Throughout all forms it is the same Shakti who works and appears as Chit-Shakti and Mâyâ-Shakti, the Spirit and Matter aspect of the Power of the Self-illuminating Chit.

# MĀYĀ SHAKTI

(THE MATTER ASPECT OF THE UNIVERSE)

Spirit and matter are ultimately one, being the twin aspects of the Fundamental Substance or Brahman. In my last lecture I dealt with the Spirit or Consciousness (Chit) aspect : in this I consider the matter aspect in which Consciousness veils itself in apparent unconsciousness. These twin principles are called Purusha, Brahman, Shiva on the one hand : and Prakriti, Māyā, and Māyā-Shakti on the other by the Sāṅkhya, Māyāvāda Vedānta and Shaktivāda of the Shākta Āgama respectively. The latter Shāstra, however, alone treats them as aspects of the one Substance in the manner here described and thus most aptly in this respect accomodates itself to the doctrine of Western scientific monism. So, the abused, though great, Professor Haeckel points out in conformity with Shākta Advaitavāda that Spirit and Matter are not two distinct entities but two forms or aspects of one single Entity or fundamental Substance. According to him the One Entity with dual aspect is the sole Reality which presents itself to view as the infinitely varied and wondrous picture of the universe. Whatever be the case transcendently in what the Buddhist Tantra aptly calls "The Void" (Shūnyatā = or, In Tibetan sTong-pa-nyid) which is not "nothing" as some have ignorantly supposed, but That which is like nothing known to us ; the ultimate formless (Arūpa) Reality as contrasted with appearance (sNang-va-dang) or form (Rūpa) of which the Prajñāpāramitā-hridaya-garbha says only "neti neti" can be affirmed.—in this universe immaterial spirit is just as unthinkable as spiritless matter. The two are inseparately combined in every atom which itself and its forces possess the elements of vitality, growth and intelligence in all their developments. In the four Ātmās which are contemplated in the Chitkunda in the Mūlādhāra Chakra, Ātmā prānarūpi represents the vital aspect, Jñānātmā the Intelligence aspect and Antarātmā is that spark of the Paramātmā which inheres in all bodies and which when spread (Vyapta) appears as the Bhūta or five forms of sensible matter which go to the making of the gross body. These are all aspects of the one Paramātmā (Jñānārṇava Tantra, Ch. XXI, Vv. 1—9).

The Vedānta recognises four states of experience, Jāgrat, Svapna, Sushupti and Turiya. These as my friend Professor Pramathanath Mukhopādhyāya has, in his radical clear-thinking way, pointed out,

may be regarded from two standpoints. We may with Shankara from the standpoint of *Siddhi* alone regard the last only, that is transcendental or pure experience (*Nirvisheshajñāna*), as the real Fact or Experience; or we may with the *Shākta Āgama* looking at the matter from the standpoint of both *Sādhana* (that is practical experience) and *Siddhi* (or transcendental experience) regard not only the supreme experience as alone real, but the whole of experience without any reservation whatever—the whole concrete Fact of Being and Becoming—and call it the Real. This is the view of the *Shaiva-Shākta* who says that the world is *Shiva's Experience* and *Shiva's Experience* can never be unreal. The question turns upon the definition of "Real." Shankara's conception of that term is, that That to which it is applied must be absolutely changeless in all the "three times." It is That which absolutely continues through and underlies all the changes of experience; being that which is given in all the four states *Jāgrat* and the rest. It is That which can never be contradicted (*Vādhita*) in all the three tenses of time and the four states of Experience. This is the Ether of Consciousness (*Chidākāsha*) and none of Its modes. Our ordinary experience, it is claimed, as well as Supreme non-polar, *Nirvikalpa Samādhi* proves this unchanging aspect of the ultimate Substance as the changeless principle of all our modes of changing experience, which according to this definition are unreal. Thus Shankara's Real=Being=Sat-Chit-Ānanda: Unreal=Becoming=Vi-varṭta=Jagat—Prapañcha or universe. According to this view there are three levels or planes of existence (*Sattā*); namely transcendental (*Pāramārthika*), empirical (*Vyāvahārika*) and illusory (*Prātibhāsika*). The Real (*Satya*) is that which is given in all the three planes (*Pāramārthika Satya*): the empirical (*Vyāvahārika Satya*) is that which is given in the second and third planes but not in the first. It is worldly or imperfect dual experience and not undual experience of *Samādhi* or *Videha-Mukti* which latter, however, underlies all states of experience being the Ether of Consciousness Itself. The last (*Prātibhāsika Satya*) is given or obtains only in the last plane being only such reality as can be attributed to illusion such as "the rope-snake." A higher plane contradicts a lower: the third is contradicted by the second, the second by the first, and the first by nothing at all. Thus there is a process of gradual elimination from changing to changeless consciousness. Real change or *Parināma* is said by the *Vedānta Paribhāsa* to exist when the effect or phenomenon and its ground (*Upādāna* or material cause) belong to the same level or plane of existence: as in the case of clay and pot, milk and curd which both belong to the *Vyāvahārika* plane; milk being



the Upādāna and curd the effect or change appertaining it it (Parināma hi upādāna-sama-sattaka-kāryyāpattih). When, however, the effects level of existence is different from (Vishama) and therefore cannot be equalled to that of its material cause or Upādāna; when, for instance, one belongs to the Vyāvahārika experience and the other to the Prātibhāsika, there is Vivartta. Vivartto hi upādāna-vishama-sattaka-kāryyāpattih. Thus in the case of the "rope-snake" the Sattā of the rope is Vyāvahārika whilst that of the Rajju-sarpa is only Prātibhāsika. For the same reason the rope, and the whole Jagat-prapancha for the matter of that, is a Vivartta in relation to the Supreme Experience of pure Chit. On its own plane or level of Sattā every phenomenon may be a Parināma but in relation to a higher level by which it becomes Vādhita it is only a Vivartta.

The Shākta Āgama differs in its presentment as follows. The Fact or Concrete Experience presents two aspects—what my friend has aptly called in his work the "Patent Wonder"—the Ether and the Stress—the quiescent background of Chit and the sprouting and evolving Shakti. Āgama takes this whole (Shiva-Shakti) embracing all the aspects as its real. If one aspect be taken apart from the others we are landed in the unreal. Therefore, in the Shākta Āgama all is real; whether the transcendent real of Shangkara (Turiya) or the empirical real of waking (Jāgrat) dreaming (Svapna) or dreamless sleep (Sushupti). It is conceded that if Real=changelessness, then the last three states are not real. But this definition of Reality is not adopted. It is again conceded that the Supreme Substance (Paravastu) is alone real in the sense of changeless, for the worlds come and go. But the Āgama says with the Sāṅkhya that a thing is not unreal because it changes. The Substance has two aspects in one of which It is changeless and in the other of which It changes. It is the same Substance in both its Prakāsha and Vimarsha aspects. Shangkara limits Reality to the Prakāsha aspect alone. Āgama extends it to both Prakāsha and Vimarsha; for these are aspects of the one. As explained later, this divergence of views turns upon the definition of Māyā given by Shangkara and of Māyā-Shakti given by the Āgama. The Māyā of Shangkara is a mysterious Shakti of īshvara by which Vivartta is sought to be explained and which has two manifestations viz., Veiling (Āvarana) and moving, changing and projecting (Vikshepa) power. īshvara is Brahman reflected in Māyā; a mystery which is separate, and yet not separate, from Brahman in Its īshvara aspect. Māyā-Shakti is an aspect of Shiva or Brahman Itself.

Starting from these premises we must assume a real nexus between the universe and its ultimate cause. The creation is real, and not *Mâyâ* in Shang-kara's sense of *Mâyâ*, but is the operation of and is *Shakti* Herself. The cause being thus real, the effect or universe is real though it changes and passes away. Even when it is dissolved, it is merged in *Shakti* who is real; withdrawn into Her as the *Sangkhyan* tortoise or *Prakriti* withdraws its limbs (*Vikriti*) into itself. The universe either is as unmanifested *Shakti* which is the perfect formless universe of Bliss or *exists* as manifested *Shakti* the limited and imperfect worlds of form. The assumption of such nexus necessarily involves that what is in the effect is in the cause; not necessarily or indeed in fact actually but potentially. Of course, the follower of Shang-kara will say that if creation is the becoming patent or actual of what is latent or potential in *Shiva*, then *Shiva* is not really *Nishkala*. A truly *Niranjana Brahman* cannot admit potential differentiation within Itself (*Svagatabheda*). Again potentiality is unmeaning in relation to the absolute and infinite Being for it pertains to relation and finite existence. If it is suggested that *Brahman* passes from one condition in which *Mâyâ* lies as a seed in it to another in which *Mâyâ* manifests Herself we are involved in the Hegelian doctrine of an Absolute in the making. It is illogical to affirm that whilst *Brahman* in one aspect does not change, It in another aspect, that is as *Shakti*, does change. All such objections are logically sound and it is for this reason that Shang-kara says that all change (*Srishti*, *Sthiti*, *Laya*) are only apparent, being but a *Kalpanâ* or imagination. But there is an answer to these objections. The *Shakta* will say that the one *Brahman* *Shiva* has two aspects in one of which as *Shakti* it changes and in the other of which as *Shiva* It does not. It is true that the doctrine of aspects evades, and does not solve, the problem. Creation is ultimately inscrutable. It is, however, he urges, better to hold two contradictory affirmations, leaving spiritual experience to synthesise them, than to neglect one at the cost of the others. For this, it is argued, is what Shang-kara does. His solution is obtained at the cost of a denial of true reality to the world which all our worldly experience affirms; and this solution is supported by the illogical statement that *Mâyâ* is not real and is yet not unreal, not partly real and partly unreal. This also flies in the face of the logical principle of contradiction. Both theories, therefore, in different ways run counter to logic. All theories ultimately do. The matter is admittedly alogical that is beyond logic, for it is beyond the ~~limits of~~ logical forms of thinking. Practically, therefore, it is

said to be better to base our theory on our experience of the reality of the world frankly leaving it to spiritual experience to solve a problem for which all logic, owing to the very constitution of the mind, fails. The ultimate proof or authority is Spiritual Experience either recorded in Veda or realised in Samādhi.

As I have already said in my paper on the spirit aspect of the One Substance, all occultism, whether of East or West, posits the principle that there is nothing in any one state or plane which is not in some way, actual or potential, in another state or plane. The Western Hermetic maxim "as above so below" is stated in the Vishvasāra Tantra in the form "what is here is there. What is not here is nowhere" (*yad ihāsti tad anyatra yannehāsti natat kvachit*); and in the northern Shaiva Scripture in the form "that what appears *without* only so appears *because* it exists *within*" (*Vartamānāvabhāsānām bhāvānām avabhāsānam antah-sthitavatām eva ghatate bahirātmanā*). For these reasons man is rightly called a microcosm (*kshudrabrahmānda*). So Charaka says that the course of production, growth, delay and destruction of the universe and man are the same. But these statements do not mean that what exists on one plane exists in that form or way on another plane. It is obvious that if it did the planes would be the same and not different. It means that the same thing exists on one plane and on all other levels of being or planes, according either to the form of that plane, if it be what is called an intermediate causal body (*Kāranāvantara sharīra*) or ultimately as mere formless potentiality. According to Shankara all such argument is itself *Māyā*. And it may be so to those who have realised true consciousness (*Chitsvarūpa*) which is beyond all causality. The Tantra Shāstra is, however, a practical and Sādhanā Shāstra. It takes the world to be real and then applies, so far as it may, to the question of its origin the logic of the mind which forms a part of it. It says that it is true that there is a supreme or perfect experience which is beyond all worlds (*Shakti Vishvottirṇā*) but there is also a worldly or (relatively to the supreme) imperfect (in the sense of limited) and partly sorrowful experience. Because the one exists, it does not follow that the other does not: though mere logic cannot construct an unassailable monism. It is the one Shiva who is Bliss itself and who is in the form of the world (*Vishvātmaka*). Shiva is both changeless as Shiva and changeful as Shakti. How the One can be both is a mystery. To say, however, with Shankara that it is *Māyā*, and in truth Brahman does not change, is not to explain the problem but to give to the problem a name. *Māyā*

by itself does not explain the ultimate "What can?" It is only a term which is given to the wondrous power of the Creatrix by which what seems impossible to us becomes possible to Her. This is recognised, as it must be, by Shangkarā who says that Māyā is unexplainable (*anirvachaniya*) as of course it is. To "explain" the Creator one would have to be the Creator Himself and then in such case there would be no need of any explanation. Looking, however, at the matter from our own practical standpoint, which is that which concerns us, we are drawn by the foregoing considerations to the conclusion that what we call "matter" is in some form in the cause which, according to the doctrine here described, produces it. But matter as experienced by us is not there; for the Supreme is Spirit only. And yet in some sense it is there or it would not be here at all. It is there as the Supreme Shakti which is Being-Consciousness-Bliss (*Chidrāpini*, *Anandamayī*) who contains within Herself the potentiality of all worlds to be projected by Her Shakti. It is there as unmanifested Consciousness-Power (*Chidrāpini Shakti*). It here *exists* as the mixed conscious-unconscious (in the sense of the limited consciousness) of the psychical and material universe. If the ultimate Reality be one, there is thus one Almighty Substance which is both spirit (*Shiva-Shakti Svarūpa*) and force-matter (*Shiva Shakti-Vishvātmaka*). Spirit and Matter are thus in the end one.

This ultimate Supreme Substance (*Paravastu*) is Shakti which is again of dual aspect as *Chit-Shakti* which represents the spiritual, and *Māyā Shakti* which represents the material aspect. The two, however, exist in inseparable connection (*Avinabhāva-sambandha*); as inseparable to use a simile of the *Shāstra* as the winds of heaven from the Ether in which they blow. Shakti, who is in Herself (*Svarūpa*) consciousness, appears as the Life-force, as subtle Mind and as gross Matter. As all is Shakti and as Shakti *Svarūpa* is Being-Consciousness-Bliss, there is and can be nothing absolutely lifeless or unconscious. For Shakti *Svarūpa* is unchanging Being-Consciousness beyond all worlds (*Chidrāpini Vishvottirṇā*) the unchanging principle of experience in such worlds; and appears as the limited psychical universe and as the apparently unconscious material forms which are the content of man's Experience (*Vishvātmikā*). The whole universe is Shakti under various forms. Therefore it is seen as commingled Spirit-matter.

According to Shaiva-Shakta doctrine Shiva and Shakti are one. Shiva represents the static aspect of the Supreme substance and Shakti the dynamic aspect; the two being derived from the root "Shak" which

denotes capacity of action or power According to Shanghara, Brahman has two aspects, in one of which or *Īshvara* it is associated with *Māya* and seems to change and in the other dissociated from *Māya* (Parabrahman). In the *Āgama* the one Shiva is both the changeless Parashiva and Parashakti and the really changing Shiva-Shakti or universe. As Shakti is one with Himself He is never associated with anything but Himself. As, however, the Supreme, He is undisplayed (Shiva-Shakti Svarūpa) and as Shiva-Shakti He is manifest in the form of the universe of mind and matter (Vishvarūpa).

Before the manifestation of the universe there was *Mahāsattā* or Grand-being. Then also there was Shiva-Shakti for there is no time when Shakti is not ; though She is sometimes manifest and sometimes not. But then Shakti is not manifest and is in its own true nature (Svarūpa); that is, Being feeling-consciousness-Bliss (*Chinmayī*, *Ānandamayī*). As Shiva is consciousness (*Chit*) and Bliss or Love (*Ānanda*), She is then simply Bliss and Love. Then when moved to create, the Great Power or *Megalis Dunamis* of the Gnostics issues from the depths of Being and becomes Mind and Matter whilst remaining what She ever was : the Being (*Sat*) which is the foundation of all manifested life and the Spirit which sustains and enlightens it. This primal Power (*Ādya Shakti*) as object of worship is the Great Mother (*Magna Mater*) of all natural things (*Natura Naturans*) and nature itself (*Natura Naturata*). In Herself (Svarūpa) She is *not a person* but She is ever and incessantly *personalizing*; assuming the multiple masks (*Persona*) which are the varied forms of mind-matter. As therefore manifest She is all Personalities and as the collectivity thereof the Supreme Person (*Parāhantā*). But in Her own ground from which, clad in form, She emerges and personalizes She is beyond all form and therefore beyond all personality known to us. She works in and as all things; now greatly veiling Her consciousness-bliss in gross matter now by gradual stages more fully revealing Herself in the forms of the one universal Life which She is.

Let us now first examine Her most gross manifestation that is, sensible matter (*Bhūta*), then Her more subtle aspect as the Life-force and Mind, and lastly Her Supreme Shakti aspect as Consciousness.

The physical human body is composed of certain compounds of which the chief are water, gelatine, fat, phosphate of lime, albumen and febrine and of these water constitutes some two-thirds of the total weight. These compounds, again are composed of simpler non-metallic elements of which the chief are oxygen to the extent of about two-

thirds) hydrogen carbon nitrogen calcium and phosphorus. So about two-thirds of the body is water and this is  $H_2O$ . Substantially then our gross body is water. But when we get to these simpler elements have we got to the root of the matter? No. It was formerly thought that matter was composed of certain elements beyond which it was not possible to go and that these elements and their atoms were indestructible. These notions have been reversed by modern science. Though the alleged indestructibility of the elements and their atoms is still said by some to present the character of a "practical truth," well-known recent discoveries and experiments go to re-establish the ancient doctrine of a single primordial substance to which these various forms of matter may be reduced, with the resultant of the possible and hitherto derided transmutation of one element into another; since each is but one of the many plural manifestations of the same underlying unity. The so-called elements are varied forms of this one substance which themselves combine to form the various compounds. The variety of our experience is due to permutation and combination of the atoms of the matter into which the primordial energy materialises. We thus find that owing to the variety of atomic combinations of H N O C there are differences in the compounds. It is curious to note in passing how apparently slight variations in the quantity and distribution of the atoms produces very varying substances. Thus gluten which is a nutrient food and quinine and strychnine which are in varying degree poisons are each compounds of C H N O. Strychnine a powerful poison is  $C_{21}H_{22}N_4O_2$  and quinine is  $C_{20}H_{24}N_4O_2$ . N and O are the same in both and there is a difference of one part only of C and 2 of H. But neither these compounds nor the so-called elements of which they are composed are permanent things. Scientific matter is now found to be only a relatively stable form of cosmic energy. All matter dissociates and passes into the energy of which it is a materialised form and again it issues from it.

Modern western science and Philosophy have thus removed many difficulties which were formerly thought to be objections to the ancient Indian doctrine on the subject here dealt with. It has, in the first place, dispelled the gross notions which were hitherto generally entertained as to the nature of "matter." According to the notions of quite recent science, "matter" was defined to be that which has mass, weight, and inertia. It must be now admitted that the two latter qualities no longer stand the test of examination, since putting aside our ignorance of the nature of weight, this quality varies if we conceive matter to

inertia is due to superficial observation it being now generally conceded that the final elements of matter are in a state of spontaneous and perpetual motion. In fact, the most general phenomenon of the universe is vibrations, to which the human body as all else is subject. Various vibrations affect differently each organ of sensation. When of certain quality and number, they denote to the skin the degree of external temperature; others incite the eye to see different colours; others again enable us to hear defined sounds. Moreover, "inertia," which is alleged to be a distinguishing quality of "matter," is said to be the possession of electricity, which is considered not to be "material." What, then, is that to which we attribute "mass"? In the first place, it is now admitted that "matter," even with the addition of all possible forces, is insufficient to explain many phenomena, such as those of light; and it has, accordingly, come to be an article of scientific *faith* that there is a substance called "Ether," a medium which, filling the universe, transports by its vibrations the radiations of light, heat, electricity, and perhaps action from a distance, such as the attraction exercised between heavenly bodies. It is said, however, that this Ether is not "matter," but differs profoundly from it, and that it is only our infirmity of knowledge which obliges us, in our attempted descriptions of it, to borrow comparisons from "matter" in its ordinary physical sense, which alone is known by our senses. But if we assume the existence of Ether, we know that "material" bodies immersed in it can change their places therein. In fact, to use an Indian expression, the characteristic property of the vibrations of the Akâsha Tattva is to make the space in which the other Tattvas and their derivatives exist. With "Matter" and Ether as its materials, Western purely "scientific" theories have sought to construct the world. The scientific atom which Du Bois Raymond described as an exceedingly useful fiction—"ausserst nützliche fiction"—is no longer considered the ultimate indestructible element, but is held to be, in fact, a kind of miniature solar system, formed by a central group or nucleus charged with positive electricity, around which very much smaller material elements, called electrons or corpuscles, charged with negative electricity, gravitate in closed orbits. These vibrate in the etheric medium in which they and the positively charged nucleus exist, constituting by their energy, and not by their mass, the unity of the atom. But what, again, is the constitution of this "nucleus" and the electrons revolving around it? There is no scientific certainty that any part of ether is due to the presence of 'matter'. On the contrary if a hypothetical corpuscle consisting solely

of an electric charge without material mass is made the subject of mathematical analysis, the logical inference is that the electron is free of "matter," and is merely an electric charge moving in the Ether; and though the extent of our knowledge regarding the positive nucleus which constitutes the remainder of the atom is small, an eminent mathematician and physicist has expressed the opinion that, if there is no "matter" in the negative charges, the positive charges must also be free from it. Thus, in the words of the author upon whose lucid analysis I have drawn, (Houlevigue's "Evolution of Science") the atom has been *dematerialised*, if one may say so, and with it the molecules and the entire universe. "Matter" (in the scientific sense) *disappears*, and we and all that surround us are physically, according to these views, mere disturbed regions of the ether determined by moving electric charges—a logical if impressive conclusion, because it is by increasing their knowledge of "matter" that physicists have been led to doubt its reality. But the question, as he points out, does not remain there. For if the speculations of Helmholtz be adopted, there is nothing absurd in imagining that the two possible directions of rotation of a vortex formed within and consisting of ether correspond to the positive and negative electric charges said to be attached to the final elements of matter. If that be so, then the trinity of matter, ether, and electricity, out of which science has hitherto attempted to construct the world, is reduced to a single element, the ether (which is not scientific "matter"), in a state of motion, and which is the basis of the physical universe. The old duality of force and matter disappears these being held to be differing forms of the same thing. Matter is a relatively stable form of energy into which, on disturbance of its equilibrium, it disappears; for all forms of matter dissociate. The ultimate basis is that energy called in Indian Prakriti, Mâyâ or Shakti.

Herbert Spencer, the Philosopher of Modern Science, carries the investigation farther, holding that the universe, whether physical or psychical, whether within or without us, is a play of Force, which, in the case of Matter, we experience as object, and that the notion that the ultimate realities are the supposed atoms of matter, to the properties and combinations of which the complex universe is due, is not true. Mind, life, and matter are each varying aspects of the one cosmic process from the first cause. Mind as such is as much a "material" organ as the brain and outer sense organs, though they are differing

forms of force





Both mind and matter derive from what Herbert Spencer calls the Primal Energy (Ādyā-Shakti) and Haeckel the fundamental spirit-matter Substance. Professor Fitz Edward Hall described the Sāṅkhya philosophy as being "with all its folly and fanaticism little better than a chaotic impertinence." It has doubtless its weaknesses like all other systems. Wherein however consists its "fanaticism" I do not know. As for "impertinence" it is neither more nor less so than any other form of Western endeavour to solve the riddle of life. As regards its leading concept "Prakriti" the Professor said that it was a notion for which the European languages were unable to supply a name; a failure, he added, which was "nowise to their discredit." The implication of this sarcastic statement is that it was not to the discredit of Western languages that they had not a name for so foolish a notion. He wrote before the revolution of ideas in science to which I have referred and with that marked antagonism to things Indian which is so common a feature of the ordinary professional orientalist.

The notion of Prakriti is not absurd. The doctrine of a primordial substance was held by some of the greatest minds in the past and has support from the most modern developments of Science. Both now concur to reject what the great Sir William Jones called "the vulgar notion of material substance." (Opera I. 36) Many people were wont, as some still are, to laugh at the idea of Māyā. Was not matter solid, permanent and real enough? But according to science what are we (as physical beings) at base? The answer is infinitely tenuous formless energy which materialises into relatively stable, yet essentially transitory, forms. According to the apt expression of the Shākta Shāstra, Shakti as She creates becomes Ghaṇtibhūta, that is, massive or thickened; just as milk becomes curd. This process by which the subtle becomes gradually more and more gross continues until it develops into what a friend of mine calls the "crust" of solid matter (Pārthiva bhūta). This whilst it lasts is tangible enough. But it will not last for ever and in some radio-active substances dissociates before our eyes. Where does it go but to that Mother-Power from whose womb it came; who exists as all forms gross and subtle and is the formless Consciousness Itself. The poet's inspiration led Shakespeare to say "We are such stuff as dreams are made of." It is a wonderful saying from a Vedāntic standpoint for centuries before him Advaita-vāda had said "Yes, dreams; for the Lord is Himself the Great World-dreamer slumbering in causal sleep as Īshvara, dreaming as Hiranyagarbha the universe experienced by Him as the Virāt or totality of all

Jivas, on waking. 'Scientific revision of the notion of "matter" helps the Vedāntic standpoint by dispelling gross and vulgar notions upon the subject; by establishing its impermanence in its form as scientific matter; by positing a subtler physical substance which is not ponderable matter; by destroying the old duality of matter and Force; and by these and other conclusions leading to the acceptance of one Primal Energy which transforms itself into that relatively stable state which is perceived by the senses as gross "matter." As, however, science deals with matter only objectively, that is, from a dualistic standpoint it does not (whatever hypotheses any particular scientist may maintain) resolve the essential problem which is stated in this country in the word *Māyā*. That problem is "How can the apparent duality be a real unity? How can we bridge the gulf between the object and the Self which perceives it? Into whatever tenuous energy the material world is resolved we are still left in the region of duality of Spirit and Matter. The position is not advanced beyond that taken by *Sāṅkhya*. The answer to the problem stated is that *Shakti* which is the origin of, and is in, all things has the power to veil Itself so that whilst in truth it is only seeing itself as object, it does not, as the created Jiva, perceive this but takes things to be outside and different from the Self. For this reason *Māyā* is called, in the *Shāstra*, *Bhedabuddhi* or the sense of difference. This is the natural characteristic of the mind.

Herbert Spencer the Philosopher of Modern Science, carrying the investigation beyond physical matter, holds, as I have already said, that the universe whether physical or psychical, whether as mind or matter, is a play of Force; Mind, Life and Matter being each varying aspects of the one cosmic process from the First Cause. This, again, is an Indian notion. For the affirmation that "scientific matter" is an appearance produced by the play of Cosmic Force and that mind is itself a product of the same play is what both *Sāṅkhya* and *Māyāvāda Vedānta* hold. Both these systems teach that mind considered in itself is, like matter, an unconscious thing and that both it and matter ultimately issue from the same single Principle which the former calls *Prakṛiti* and the latter *Māyā*. Consciousness and Unconsciousness are in the universe inseparable, whatever be the degree of manifestation, of veiling of Consciousness. For the purpose of analysis, Mind in itself—that is considered hypothetically as dissociated from Consciousness which, in fact, is never the case, (though Consciousness exists apart from the mind) is a force-process like the physical brain. Consciousness (*Chit*) is associated with mind ( ) which is its organ of

expression of mind. Consciousness is not a mere manifestation of material mind. Consciousness must not be identified with its *mental modes*; an identification which leads to the difficulties in which western metaphysic has so often found itself. It is the ultimate Reality in which all modes whether subjective or objective exist.

The assertion that mind is in itself unconscious may seem a strange statement to the Western reader who, if he does not identify mind and consciousness, at any rate, regards the latter as an attribute or function of mind. The point, however, is of such fundamental importance for the understanding of Indian doctrine that it may be further developed.

According to the Lokayata School of Indian materialism, mind was considered to be the result of the chemical combination of the four forms of material substance, earth, water, fire and air, in organic forms. According to the Pārva Mīmāṃsā and the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, the Self or Ātmā is in itself and that is by nature (Svabhāvataḥ), unconscious (Jada, Achidrūpa); for Ātmā is said to be unconscious (Achetana) in dreamless sleep (Sushupti); and consciousness arises as a produced thing by association of the Ātmā with the mind, senses and body. The reader is referred to Chandra Kānta Tarkalāṅkāra's Bengali Lectures on Hindu Philosophy, one of the most valuable achievements of the Calcutta University. At P. 105 he cites Prabhakāra Mīmāṃsāśāhāryya, saying that Vaiśeṣika-Nyāya supports the view, *Sa Chetanashchittā yogāt tadyogena vinā jadah*. "Ātmā is Conscious by union (with knowledge [Jñāna] which comes to it by association with mind and body); without it, it is unconscious." Ātmā, according to this Darśhana, is that in which (Āśraya) Jñāna inheres. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa says Ātmā is partly Prakāśha and Aprakāśha (luminous and non-luminous) like a fire-fly. But this is denied, as Ātmā is Nirangsha (partless). Knowledge thus arises from the association of mind (Manas) with Ātma, the senses (Indriya) with Manas, and the senses with their objects. That is, worldly (laukika) knowledge, which is the true that is non-illusory—apprehension of objects. Jñāna in the spiritual Vedantic sense of Māyāvāda is Paramātmā, or pure Consciousness realised. The former Jñāna, in that it arises without effort on the presentation of the objects is not action (Kriyā), and differs from the forms of mental action (Mānasi Kriyā), such as will (Ichchhā), contemplation and the like. Ātmā manasā sanggujyate, mana indriyena, indriyam arthena, tato bhavati jñānam. Both these theories are refuted by Sāṅkhya and Advaitavāda Vedānta (as interpreted by Śaṅkara to which unless

otherwise stated I refer) which affirm that the very nature of *Ātmā* is Consciousness (*Chit*), and all else, whether mind or matter, is unconscious, though the former appears not to be so. The *Jīva* mind is not itself conscious, but reflects consciousness, and therefore appears to be conscious. Consciousness as such is eternal and immutable; Mind is a creation and changeable. Consciousness as such is unconditional. In the mind of the *Jīva*, Consciousness appears to be conditioned by that *Māyā* *Shakti* which produces mind, and of which *Shakti*, mind is a particular manifestation. Mind, however, is not the resultant of the operation of the *Bhūta*—that is, of gross natural forces or motions—but is in *Sāṅkhya* and in Vedāntic monism an evolution which is cosmically prior to them.

The mode of exposition in which Consciousness is treated as being in itself something apart from, though associated with, mind is profound; because, while it recognises the intermingling of Spirit and Matter in the embodied being (*Jīva*), it yet at the same time clearly distinguishes them. It thus avoids the imputation of change to Spirit (*Ātmā*). The latter is ever in its own true nature immutable. Mind is ever changing, subject to sensations, forming ideas, making resolves, and so forth. Spirit in itself is neither thus affected nor acts. manifold change takes place through motion and vibration in the unconscious *Prakṛiti* and *Māyā*. Mind is one of the results of such motion, as matter is another. Each of them is a form of specific transformation of the one Principle whence unconsciousness, whether real or apparent, arises. That, however, mind *appears* to be conscious the Vedānta and *Sāṅkhya* admit. This is called *Chidhabhāsa*—that is, the appearance of something as *Chit* (Consciousness) which is not really *Chit*. This appearance of Consciousness is due to the reflection of *Chit* upon it. A piece of polished steel which lies in the sunshine may appear to be self-luminous, when it is merely reflecting the sun, which is the source of the light it appears to give out. *Chit* as such is immutable and never evolves. What do evolve are the various forms of natural forces produced by *Prakṛiti* or *Māyā*. These two are, however, conceived as being in association in such a way that the result of such association is produced without *Chit* being really affected at all. The classical illustration of the mode and effect of such association is given in the *Sāṅkhyan* aphorism, "Just like the jewel and the flower"—*Kusumavachcha māṇih* (*Sāṅkhya Pravachana Sūtra*, II, 35)—that is, when a scarlet hibiscus flower is placed in contiguity to a crystal, the latter appears to be red, though it still in fact retains its pure transparency,

as is seen when the flower is removed. On the other hand, the flower as reflected in the crystal takes on a shining, transparent aspect which its opaque surface does not really possess. In the same way Consciousness appears to be conditioned by the force of unconsciousness in the Jiva, but is really not so. "Changeless Chit Shakti, which does not move towards anything, yet seems to do so" (Sāṅkhya Pravachana Sāra). And, on the other hand, Mind as one of such unconscious forces takes on the semblance of Consciousness though this is borrowed from Chit and is not its own natural quality. This association of Unconscious Force with Consciousness has a two-fold result, both obscuring and revealing. It obscures, in so far as, and so long as it is in operation it prevents the realisation of pure Consciousness (Chit). When mind is absorbed pure Consciousness shines forth. In this sense this Power, or Māyā is spoken of as a Veil. In another sense it reveals—that is, it manifests—the world, which does not exist except through the instrumentality of Māyā which the world is. Prakṛiti and Māyā produce both Mind and Matter; on the former of which Consciousness is reflected (Chidabhāsa). The human mind, then, appears to be conscious, but of its own nature and inherent quality is not so. The objective world of matter is, or appears to, be an unconscious reality. These alternatives are necessary, because in Sāṅkhya unconsciousness is a reality; in Vedānta an appearance. In the Shākta Tantra apparent unconsciousness is an aspect (Avidyā Shakti) of Conscious Shakti. Consciousness is, according to Advaita Vedānta, the true existence of both, illumining the one, hidden in the other.

The internal instrument (Antahkarana or Mind is one only, but is given different names—Buddhi, Ahangkāra, Manas—to denote the diversity of its functions. From the second of these issue the senses (Indriya and their objects, the sensibles (Mābābhūta), or gross matter with the supersensibles (the Tanmātra) as its intermediate cause. All these proceed from the one Prakṛiti and Māyā.

Therefore, according to these systems, Consciousness is Chit and Mind or Antahkarana is a transformation of Prakṛiti and Māyā respectively. In itself Mind is an unconscious specialised organ developed out of the Primordial Energy, Mūla Prakṛiti or Māyā. It is thus not, in itself, consciousness but a special manifestation of conscious existence borrowing its consciousness from the Chit which is reflected on it. Shākta doctrine states the same matter in a different form. Consciousness at rest is Chit-Svarūpa. Consciousness in movement is Chit-Shakti associated with Māyā Shakti. The

Shiva-Shakti Svarūpa is consciousness (Chit, Chidrūpini). There is no independent Prakriti as Sāṅkhya holds, nor an unconscious Māyā which is not Brahman and yet not separate from Brahman, as Śaṅkara teaches. What there is, is Māyā-Shakti; that is Consciousness (for Shakti is in itself such) veiling, as the Mother, Herself to herself as Her creation, the Jīva. There is no need then for Chidabhāsa. For mind is consciousness veiling itself in the forms or limitation of apparent unconsciousness.

This is an attractive exposition of the matter because in the universe consciousness and unconsciousness are mingled and the abolition of unconscious Māyā satisfies the desire for unity. In all these cases however, mind and matter represent either the real or apparent unconscious aspect of things. If man's consciousness is, or appears to be limited, such limitation must be due to some principle without, or attached to, or inherent in, consciousness; which in some sense or other must *ex hypothesi* be really, or apparently, different from the consciousness, which it seems to affect or actually affects. In all these systems mind and matter equally derive from a common *limiting* principle which actually or apparently limits the Infinite Consciousness. In all three there is beyond manifestation, Consciousness or Chit which in manifestation appears as a parallelism of mind and matter, the substratum of which from a monistic standpoint is Chit.

Herbert Spencer, however, as many other Western Philosophers do, differs from the Vedānta in holding that the noumenon of these phenomena is not Consciousness, for the latter is by them considered to be by its very nature conditioned and concrete. This noumenon is therefore declared to be unknown and unknowable. But force as such is blind, and can only act as it has been predetermined. We discover consciousness in the universe. The cause must, therefore, it is argued be Consciousness. It is but reasonable to hold that, if the first cause be of the nature of either Consciousness or Matter, and not of both, it must be of the nature of the former, and not of the latter. An unconscious object may well be conceived to modify Consciousness, but not to produce Consciousness out of its unconscious Self. According to Indian

there are the material (IT Adina) cause Kāraṇa),

and instrumental cause. A thing can only dissolve into its own cause. The agency (Karttitva) of Īshvara is attributed (Anpādhika) only.

The Vedānta, therefore, and its Shākta presentment say that the Noumenon is knowable and known, for it is the inner Self, which is not an unconscious principle as the will of Schopenhauer, has been said (rightly or wrongly) to be, but Being-Consciousness, which, as above explained, is not conditioned or concrete, but is the absolute Self-identity. Nothing can be more intimately known than the Self. The objective side of knowledge is conditioned because of the nature of its organs which, whether mental or material, are conditioned. Sensation, perception, conception, intuition are but different modes in which the one Consciousness manifests itself, the differences being determined by the variety of condition and form of the different organs of knowledge through which consciousness manifests. There is thus a great difference between the Agnostic and the Vedāntist. The former, as for instance Herbert Spencer, says that the Absolute can not be known because nothing can be predicated of it. Whereas the Vedāntin when he says that It cannot be known (in the ordinary sense) means that this is because It is knowledge itself. Our ordinary experience does not know a consciousness of pure being without difference. But though it can not be pictured it may be apprehended. It can not be thought because it is Pure Knowledge itself. It is that state which is realised only in Samādhi but is apprehended indirectly as the Unity which underlies and sustains all forms of changing finite experience.

What, lastly, is Life? The underlying substance is Being-in-itself. Life is a manifestation of such Being. If by Life we understand life in form, then the ultimate substance is not that; for it is formless. But in a supreme sense it is Life; for it is Eternal Life whence all life is in form proceeds. It is not dead Being. If it were It could not produce Life. The Great Mother is Life; both the life of Her children and the Life of their lives. Nor does She produce what is without life or something different from Her. What is in the cause is in the effect. Some Western Scientists have spoken of the "Origin of Life" and have sought to find it. It is a futile quest for Life has no origin. We cannot discover the beginnings of that which is essentially eternal. The question is vitiated by the false assumption that there is anything dead in the sense that it is wholly devoid of Life. There is no such thing. The whole world is a living manifestation of the source of all life which is Absolute Being. It is sometimes made a reproach against

Hinduism that it knows not a 'living God' What is meant I cannot say. For it is certain that it does not worship a dead God whatever such may be. Perhaps by "living" is meant "Personal." If so, the charge is again ill-founded. Īshvara and Īshvari are Rulers in whom all personalities and personality itself are. But in their ground they are beyond all manifestation, that is limitation which personality, as we understand it, involves. Man, the animal and the plant alone, it is true, exhibit certain phenomena which are commonly called vital. What exhibits such phenomena, we have commonly called "living." But it does not follow that what does not exhibit the phenomena which belong to our definition of life is itself "dead." We may have to revise our definition, as in fact we are commencing to do. Until recently it was commonly assumed that matter was of two kinds :—inorganic or dead, and organic or living. The mineral was "dead," the vegetable animal and man were endowed with "life." But these living forms are compounded of so-called "dead" matter. How, then, is it possible that there is life in the organic kingdom the parts of which are ultimately compounded of "dead" matter? This necessarily started the futile quest for the "origin of life." Life can only come from life : not from death. The greatest errors arise from the making of false partitions in nature which do not exist. We make these imaginary partitions and then vainly attempt to surmount them. There are no partitions, no gulfs. All is continuous, even if we cannot at present establish in each case the connection. That there should be such gulfs is unthinkable to any one who has in small degree grasped the notion of the unity of things. There is a complete connected chain in the hierarchy of existence from the lowest forms of apparently inert (but now observed to be moving) matter, through the vegetable, animal human worlds ; and then through such Devatās as are super human intelligences up to the Brahman. From the latter to a blade of grass says as the Shāstra, all are one.

Western Scientific notions have, however, in recent years undergone a radical evolution as regards the underlying unity of substance, destructive of the hitherto accepted notions of the discontinuity of matter and its organisation. The division of nature into the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms is still regarded as of practical use, but it is now recognised that no such clear line of demarcation exists between them as has hitherto been supposed in the West. Between each of nature's types there are said to be innumerable transitions. The notion of inert "dead" matter, the result of superficial observation, ~~now given way~~ upon the revelation of the activities at work under this



apparent inertia forces which endow brute substance with many of the characteristics of living beings. It is no longer possible to dogmatically affirm where the inorganic kingdom ends and "life" begins. It must be rather asserted that many phenomena hitherto considered characteristic of "life" belong to "inert matter" composed of molecules and atoms, as "animated matter" is of cells and micellæ. It has been found that so-called "inert matter" possesses an extraordinary power of organisation, and is not only capable of apparently imitating the forms of "living" matter, but presents in a certain degree the same functions and properties.

Sentientcy is a characteristic of all forms of Existence. Physiologists measure the sensibility of a being by the degree of excitement necessary to produce in it a reaction. Of this it has been said (Le Bon "Evolution of Matter," 250). "This sensibility of matter, so contrary to what popular observation seems to indicate is becoming more and more familiar to physicists. This is why such an expression as the 'life of matter' utterly meaningless twenty-five years ago has come into common use. The study of mere matter yields ever increasing proofs that it has properties which were formerly deemed the exclusive appanage of living beings." Life exists throughout but manifests in various ways. The arbitrary division which has been drawn between "dead" and "living" matter has no existence in fact, and speculations as to the origin of "life" are vitiated by the assumption that there is anything which exists without it, however much its presence may be veiled from us. Western science would thus appear to be moving to the conclusion that there is no "dead" matter, but that life exists everywhere, not merely in that in which, as in 'organic matter,' it is to us plainly and clearly expressed, but also in the ultimate "inorganic" atoms of which it is composed—atoms which, in fact, have their organisations as have the beings which they go to build—and that all, to the minutest particle, is vibrating with unending Energy (Tejas).

Manifested life is Prâna, a form of Kriyâ Shakti in, and evolved from, the Linga Sharîra, itself born of Prakriti. Prâna or the vital principle has been well defined ("Hindu Realism" by J. C. Chatterji) to be 'the special relation of the Âtmâ with a certain form of matter which by this relation the Âtmâ organises and builds up as a means of having experience.' This special relation constitutes the individual Prâna in the individual body. Just as in the West "life" is a term commonly used of organised body only so also is the term

**Prāna used in the East** It is the technical name given to the phenomena called vital exhibited by such bodies, the source of which is the Brahman Itself. The individual Prāna is limited to the particular body which it vitalises and is a manifestation in all breathing creatures (Prāṇi) of the creative and sustaining activity of the Brahman. All beings exist so long as the Prāna is in the body. It is as the Kaushitaki Upanishad says "the life duration of all." The cosmic all pervading Prāna is the collectivity of all Prāṇas and is the Brahman as the source of the individual Prāna. On the physical plane Prāna manifests as breath through inspiration "Sa" or Shakti and expiration "Ha" or Shiva. So the Niruttara Tantra (Chapter IV) says:—By Hangkāra it goes out and by Sakāra it comes in again. A Jīva always recites the Supreme Mantra Hangsa."

*Hangkārena bahiryāti sakārena vishet punah.*

*Hangseti paramang mantrang jīvo japati sarvvadā.*

Breathing is itself the Ajapa Mantra. Prāna is thus Shakti as the universally pervading source of life organising itself as matter into what we call living forms. When the Prāna goes, the organism which it holds together disintegrates. Nevertheless each of the atoms which remain has a life of its own, existing as such separately from the life of the organised body of which they formed a part; just as each of the cells of the living body has a life of its own. The gross outer body is heterogeneous (Parāchchhinna) or made up of distinct or well-defined parts. But the Prānamaya Self which lies within the Annamaya Self is an homogeneous undivided whole (Sādhārana) permeating the whole physical body (Sarvapindavyāpin). It is not cut off into distinct regions (Asādhārana) as is the Pinda or micro-cosmic physical body. Unlike the latter it has no specialised organs each discharging a specific function. It is a homogeneous unity (Sādhārana) present in every part of the body which it ensouls as its inner vital Self. Vāyu as universal vital activity, on entry into each body, manifests itself in ten different ways. It is the one Prāna though different names are given according to its functions of which the five chief are appropriation (Prāna) Rejection (Apāna) Assimilation (Samāna) Distribution (Vyāna) and that vital function (Udāna) whereby the relation between the subtle and the gross body is maintained. Prāna in its general sense represents reflex action of the organism, just as the Indriyas voluntary activity. Breathing is a function

to which it appears and disappears The life of Brahmā is the duration of the outgoing breath (Nishvāsa) of Kāla.

The Sāṅkhya rejecting the Lokayata notion that Vāyu is a mere biomechanical force or mechanical motion resulting from such a Vāyu holds, on the principle of the Economy of categories, that life is a resultant of the various concurrent activities of other principles or forces in the organism. This again the Vedantists deny, holding that it is a separate independent principle and material form assumed through Māyā by the one consciousness. In either case it is an unconscious force since everything which is not the Ātmā or Puruṣa is according to Māyāvāda and Sāṅkhya unconscious or, in Western parlance, material (Jada).

If we apply Shākta principles, then Prāna is a name of the general Shakti displaying itself in the organisation of matter and the vital phenomena which bodies when organised exhibit. Manifest Shakti is vitality which is a limited concrete display in forms of Her own formless Being or Sat. All Shakti is Jñāna, Ichchhā, Kriyā, and in its form as Prakriti, the Gunas Sattva, Rajas, Tamas. She desires, impelled by Her nature, (Ichchhā) to build up forms; sees how it should be done (Jñāna); and then does it (Kriyā). The most tāmasic form of Kriyā is the mechanical energy displayed in material bodies. But this is itself the product of Her Vitivty and not the cause of it. Ultimately then Prāna, like everything else, is consciousness which, as Shakti, limits Itself in forms which it first creates and sustains; then builds up into other more elaborate forms and again sustains until their life period is run. All creation and maintenance is a limiting power with the appearance of unconsciousness, in so far as and to the degree that it confines the boundless Being-Consciousness-Bliss; yet that power is nothing but consciousness negating and limiting itself. The great mother (Shrī mātā) limits Her infinite being in and as the universe and maintains it. In so far as the form and its life is a limited thing, it is apparently unconscious, for consciousness is thereby limited. At each moment there is creation but we call the first appearance creation (Srishti) and its continuance through the agency of Prāna, maintenance (Sthiti). But both that which is apparently limited and that whose operation has that effect is Being-Consciousness. Prāna Vāyu is the self-begotten but limited manifestation of the eternal Life. It is called Vāyu (Vā=to move) because it courses throughout the whole universe. Invisible in itself yet its operations are **fest**. For it determines the birth growth

and decay of all animated organisms and as such receives the homage of all created Being. For it is the Prānarūpi Ātmā, the Prāna Shakti.

For those by whom inorganic matter was considered to be "dead" or lifeless it followed that it could have 'no Feeling-Consciousness, since the latter was deemed to be an attribute of life. Further, consciousness was denied because it was, and is in deed now, commonly assumed that every conscious experience presupposes a subject, conscious of being such, attending to an object. As Professor P. Mukhopādhyāya ("Approaches to Truth") has well pointed out, consciousness was identified with intelligence or understanding—that is with directed consciousness; so that where no direction or form is discernible, Western thinkers have been apt to imagine that consciousness as such has also ceased. To their pragmatic eye consciousness is always particular having a particular direction and from.

According, however, to Indian views there are three states of consciousness; (1) a supramental supreme consciousness dissociated from mind. This is the Paramātmā Chit which is the basis of all existence, whether organic or inorganic, and of thought; of which the Shruti says "know that which does not think by the mind and by which the mind is thought." There are then two main manifested states of consciousness. (2) consciousness associated with mind in organic matter working through its vehicles of mind and matter; (3) consciousness associated with and almost entirely veiled by inorganic gross matter (Bhūta) only; such as the muffled consciousness evidenced by its response to external stimuli as shown in the experiments with which Dr. Jagadish Bose's name is associated. Where are we to draw the lowest limit of sensation; and if a limit be assigned, why there? As Dr. Ernst Mach has pointed out (Analysis of sensations, 243) the question is natural enough if we start from the commonly current physical conception. It is, of course, not asserted that inorganic matter is conscious to itself in the way that the higher organised life is. The response, however, which it makes to stimuli is evidence that consciousness lies heavily veiled in, and imprisoned by, it. Inorganic matter displays it in the form of that seed or rudiment of sentiency which, enlarging into the simple pulses of feeling of the lowest degrees of organised life, at length emerges in the developed self-conscious sensations of human life. Owing to imperfect scientific knowledge the first of these aspects was not in antiquity capable of physical proof in the same way or to the same extent, as Modern Science with its delicate apparatus have made possible. Starting, however, from the revealed

and intuitionally held truth that all was Brahman the conclusion necessarily followed. All Bhûta is composed of the three Gunas of Prakriti. It is the Sattva in gross matter (almost entirely suppressed by Tamas though it be) which manifests the phenomena of sensibility observed in matter. In short, nature, it has been well said, knows no sharp boundaries or yawning gulfs though we may ignore the subtle connecting links between things. There is no break in continuity. Being and Consciousness are co-extensive. Consciousness is not limited to those centres in the Ether of consciousness which are called organised bodies. But just as life is differently expressed in the mineral and in man, so is Consciousness which many have been apt to think exists in the developed animal and even in man only.

Consciousness (Chitshakti) exists in all the hierarchy of Being and is, in fact, Being. It is, however, in all bodies veiled by its power or Mâyâ shakti which is composed of the three Gunas. In inorganic matter, owing to the great predominance of Tamas, Consciousness is so greatly veiled and the life force is so restrained that we get the appearance of insensibility, inertia and mere mechanical energy. In organised bodies the action of Tamas is gradually lessened so that the members of the universal hierarchy become more and more Sâttvik as they ascend in the scale of evolution. Consciousness itself does not change. It remains the same throughout. What does change is its wrappings, unconscious or apparently so, as they may alternatively be called. This wrapping is Mâyâ and Prakriti with their Gunas. The figure of "wrapping" is apt to illustrate the presentment of Sîngkhya and Mâyâvâda. From the Shâkta aspect we may compare the process to one in which it being assumed that in one aspect there is an unchanging light, in another it is either turned up or turned down as the case may be. In gross matter the light is so turned down that it is not ordinarily perceptible and even delicate scientific experiment gives rise to contending assertions. When the veiling by Tamas is lessened in organic life and the Jîva is thus less bound in matter, the same Consciousness (for there is no other) which previously manifested as what seems to us a mere mechanical reaction, manifests in its freer environment in that sensation which we associate with consciousness as popularly understood. Shakti who ever negates herself as Mâyâ Shakti, more and more reveals Herself as Chit-Shakti. There is thus a progressive release of Consciousness from the bonds of matter until it attains complete freedom or liberation (Moksha) when as the Chhândogya Upanishad says *Âtmâ is Itself* (*Âtmâ Svarûpa* or Pure Consciousness). At this point the

same Shākti who had operated as Māyā is Herself that is Chidrapīnī or Consciousness

According to the Hindu books, plants have a sort of dormant Consciousness, and are capable of pleasure and pain. Chakrapānī says in the Bhānumati that the Consciousness of plants is a kind of stupified, darkened, or comatose Consciousness. Udayāna also says that plants have a dormant Consciousness which is very dull. The differences between plant and animal life have always been regarded by the Hindus as being one not of kind, but degree. And this principle may be applied throughout. Life and Consciousness is not a product of evolution. The latter merely manifests it. Manu speaks of plants as being creatures enveloped by darkness caused by past deeds, having, however, an internal Consciousness and a capacity for pleasure and pain. And, in the Mahābhārata, Bhṛigu says to Bharadvāja that plants possess the various senses, for they are affected by heat, sounds, vision (whereby, for instance, the creeper pursues its path to the light), odours, and the water which they taste. I may refer also to such stories as, that of the Yāmālārjunavriksha of the Shrimad Bhāgavata mentioned in Professor Brajendra Nath Seal's learned work on "The Positive sciences of the ancient Hindus" and Professor S. N. Das Gupta's studious paper on Parināma to which I am indebted for these instances.

Man has passed through all lower states of Consciousness and is capable of reaching the highest through Yoga. The Jīva attains birth as man after having been, it is said, born 84 lakhs (8,400,000) of times as plants (Vrikshādi), aquatic animals (Jalayoni), insects and the like (Krimi), birds (Pakshi), beasts (Pashvādi), and monkeys (Bānara). He then is born 2 lakhs of times (2,00,000) in the inferior species of humanity, and then gradually attains a better and better birth until he is liberated from all the bonds of matter. The exact number of each kind of birth is in lakhs 20, 9, 11, 10, 30, 4, lakhs, respectively—84 lakhs. As pointed out by Mahāmahopadhyāya Chandrakānta Tarkalāngkāra (Lectures on "Hindu Philosophy," 5th year, P. 227, lecture VII), preappearance in monkey forms is not a Western theory only. The Consciousness which manifests in him is not altogether a new creation, but an unfolding of that which has ever existed in the elements of which he is composed. and in the Vegetable and Animal through which prior to his human birth he has passed. In him, however, matter is so rearranged and organized as to permit of the fullest manifestation

which has hitherto existed of the underlying Chit Man's is the both so difficult of attainment' (Durlabha) This is an oft repeated statement of Shâstra in order that he should avail himself of the opportunities which Evolution has brought him. If he does not, he falls back and may do so without limit into gross matter again, passing immediately through the Hells of suffering. Western writers in general describe such a descent as unscientific. How, they ask, can a man's Consciousness reside in an animal or plant. The question shows ignorance. The answer is that it does not. When man sinks again into an animal he ceases to be a man. He does not continue to be both man and animal. His consciousness is an animal consciousness and not a human consciousness. It is a childish view which regards such a case as being the imprisonment of a man in an animal body. If he can go up he can also go down. The soul or subtle body is not a fixed but an evolving thing. Only Spirit (Chit) is eternal and unchanged. In man the revealing constituent of Prakriti Shakti (Sattvaguna) commences to more fully develop and his consciousness is fully aware of the objective world and his own Ego and displays itself in all those functions of it which are called his faculties. We here reach the world of ideas but these are a superstructure on consciousness and not its foundation or basis. Man's Consciousness is still however veiled by Mâyâ Shakti. With the greater predominance of Sattvaguna in divine man consciousness becomes more and more divine until it is altogether freed of the bonds of Mâyâ and the Jiva Consciousness expands into the pure Brahman Consciousness. Thus life and Consciousness exist throughout. All is living. All is Consciousness. In the world of gross matter they seem to disappear being almost suppressed by the veil of Mâyâ-Shakti's Tamoguna. As however ascent is made, they are less and less veiled and Pure Consciousness is at length realised in Samâdhi and Moksha. Chit-Shakti and Mâyâ-Shakti exist inseparable throughout the whole universe. There is therefore not a particle of matter which is without life and consciousness variously displayed or concealed though they be. Manifest Mâyâ-Shakti is the universe of which Chit-Shakti is the changeless Spirit. Unmanifest Mâyâ-Shakti is Consciousness. (Chidrûpiṇī). There are many persons who think that they have disposed of a doctrine when they have given it an opprobrious, or what they think to be an opprobrious, name. And so they dub all this "animism" which the reader of Census Reports associates with primitive and savage tribes. There are some people who are frightened by names. It is not but facts which should touch us. Certainly

'animism' is in some respects an incorrect and childlike way of putting the matter. It is, however, an imperfect presentment of a central truth which has been held by some of the profoundest thinkers in the world, even in an age which we are apt to think to be superior to all others. Primitive man in his simplicity made discovery of several such truths, and so it has been well said that the simple savage and the child who regard all existence as akin to their own, living and feeling like himself have, notwithstanding their errors, more truly felt the pulse of being than the civilized man of culture. How essentially stupid some of the latter can be needs no proof. For the process of civilization being one of abstraction, they are less removed from the concrete fact than he is. Hence their errors which seem the more contorted due to the mass of useless verbiage in which they are expressed. And yet as extremes meet, so having passed through our present condition we may regain the truths perceived by the simple not only through formal worship but by that which consist of the pursuit of all knowledge and science when once the husk of all material thinking is cast aside. For him who sees the Mother in all things, all scientific research is wonder and worship. The seeker looks upon not mere mechanical movements of so-called "dead" matter but the wondrous play of Her Whose form all matter is. As She thus reveals Herself She induces in him a passionate exaltation and that sense of security which is only gained as approach is made to the Central Heart of things. For as the Upanished says "He only fears who sees duality," Some day may be, one who unites in himself the scientific ardour of the West and the all-embracing religious feeling of India will create another and a modern Chanda with its multiple salutations to the sovereign World-Mother. (Namastasyai namo namah). Such an one seeing the changing marvels of Her world-play will exclaim with the Yoginirhridaya Tantra "I salute Her the Samvid Kalā who shines in the form of Space, Time and all Objects therein".

*Deshakālapadārthatmā yadyad vastu yathā yathā,  
Tad tad rūpeṇa yā bhāti tāṅ shrāye samvidam kalām.*

This is, however, not mere Nature-worship as it is generally understood in the West, or the worship of Force as Keshub Chunder Sen took the Shākta doctrine to be. All things exist *in* the Supreme who in Itself infinitely transcends all finite forms. It is the worship of God as the Mother-Creatrix who manifests in the form of all things which are, ~~not~~ <sup>are</sup> but an atom of dust on the Feet of Her who is Infinite.



I have in my paper "Shakti and Māyā" (here reprinted from the Indian Philosophical Review No. 2) contrasted the three different concepts of the Primal Energy as Prakriti, Māyā and Shakti of Sāṅkhya, Vedānta and the Āgama respectively. I will not, therefore, repeat myself but will only summarise conclusions here. In the first place, there are features common to all three concepts. Hitherto greater pains have been taken to show the differences between the Darśhanas than by regarding their points of agreement; and (as regard apparent disagreement, their view-point) to co-ordinate them systematically. It has been said that Truth cannot be found in such a country as India in which there are six systems of philosophy disputing with one another and where even in one system alone there is a conflict between Dvaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Advaita. One might suppose from such a criticism that all in Europe were of one mind or that at least the Christian Community was agreed instead of being split up, as it is, into hundreds of sects. An American humourist observed with truth that there was a good deal of human nature in man everywhere. Of course there is difference which as the Radd-ul-Muhtar says is also the gift of God. This is not to deny that Truth is only one. It is merely to recognise that whilst Truth is one, the nature and capacities of those who seek it, or claim to possess it, vary. The same white light which passes through vari-coloured glass takes on its various colours. All cannot apprehend the truth to the same extent or in the same way. Hence the sensible Indian doctrine of competency or Adhikāra. In the Christian Gospel it is also said "Throw not your pearls before swine lest they trample upon them and then rend you." What can be given to any man is what only he can receive.

The six philosophies represent differing standards according to the manner and to the extent to which the one Truth may be apprehended. Each standard goes a step beyond the last, sharing however with it certain notions in common. As regards the present matter all these systems start with the fact that there is Spirit and Matter, Consciousness and Unconsciousness, apparent or real. Sāṅkhya, Vedānta and the Śākta Āgama called the first Puruṣa, Brahman, Shiva; and the second Prakriti, Māyā, Shakti respectively. All agree that it is from the association together of these two Principles that the universe arises and that such association is the universe. All, again, agree that one Principle namely the first is formless consciousness and the second is a *finitising* principle which makes forms. Thirdly, all regard this last as a veiling principle that is, one which veils consciousness and hold that it is eternal

al pervading existing now as seed (Mulaprakṛiti Avyakta) and now as fruit (Vikṛiti) composed of the Gunas Sattva, Rajas and Tamas; unperceivable except through its effects. In all it is the Natural principle the material cause of the material universe.

The word Prakṛiti has been said to be derived from the root "Kṛi" and the affix "Kṛin" which is added to express Bhāva or the abstract idea and sometimes the Karma or object of the action corresponding with the Greek affix *Sis*. *Kṛin* inflected in the nominative becomes *tis*. Prakṛiti, therefore, has been said to correspond with *Physis* (Nature) of the Greeks. In all three systems, therefore, it is, as the natural contrasted with the spiritual aspect of things.

The first main point of difference is between Sāṅkhya on the one hand and the Advaita Vedānta, whether as interpreted by Shankara or taught by the Shaiva-Shākta Tantra on the other. Classical Sāṅkhya is a dualistic system, whereas the other two are monism. The classical Sāṅkhya posits a plurality of Ātmans representing the formless consciousness with one unconscious Prakṛiti which is formative activity. Prakṛiti is thus a real independent principle. Vedantic monism does not altogether discard these two principles but says that they cannot exist as two independent Realities. There is only one Brahman. The two categories of Sāṅkhya, Puruṣa and Prakṛiti are reduced to one Reality the Brahman, otherwise the Vākya "All this is verily Brahman" (Sarvvaṃ khalvidam Brahma) is falsified.

But how is this effected? It is on this point that Māyāvāda of Shankara and the Advaita of Shaiva-Shākta Āgama differ. Both systems agree that Brahman has two aspects in one of which It is transcendent and in another creative and immanent. According to Shankara, Brahman is in one aspect Ishvara associated with, and in another Brahman dissociated from, Māyā which in his system occupies the place of the Sāṅkhyan Prakṛiti, to which it is (save as to reality and independence) similar. What is Māyā? It is not a real independent Principle like the Sāṅkhyan Prakṛiti. Then is it Brahman or not? According to Shankara, it is an unthinkable, alogical, unexplainable (Anirvachanīya) mystery. It is an eternal falsity (Mithyabhūta sanātani) owing what false appearance of reality it possesses to the Brahman with Which in one aspect It is associated. It is not real for there is only one such. It cannot be said to be unreal for it is the cause of and is empirical experience. It is something which is not unreal (Asat) nor partly real and partly

(śadasat), and which though not forming part of Brahman, and therefore not Brahman, is yet, though not a second reality, inseparably associated and sheltering with (Mâyābrahmāśritā) Brahman in its Ishvara aspect. Like the Sāṅkhyan Prakriti, Mâyā (whatever it be) is in the nature of an unconscious principle. The universe appears by the reflection of consciousness (Purusha, Brahman) on unconsciousness (Prakriti, Mâyā). In this way the unconscious is made to appear conscious. This is Chidābhāsa.

Mâyā is illusive and so is Shankara's definition of it. Further though Mâyā is not a second reality but a mysterious something of which neither reality nor unreality can be affirmed, the fact of positing it at all gives to Shankara's doctrine a tinge of dualism from which the Shākta doctrine is free. For it is to be noted that notwithstanding that Mâyā is a falsity, it is not according to Shankara a mere negation or want of something (Abhāva) but a positive entity (Bhāvartūpamajñānam) that is in the nature of a Power which veils (Achchhādaka) consciousness, as Prakriti does in the case of Purusha. Shankara's system, on the other hand, has this advantage from a monistic standpoint, that whilst he, like the Shākta, posits the doctrine of aspects saying that in one aspect the Brahman is associated with Mâyā (Ishvara) and in another it is not (Parabrahman); yet in neither aspect does his Brahman change. Whereas according to Shākta doctrine Shiva does in one aspect, that is as Shakti, change.

Whilst then Shankara's teaching is consistent with the changelessness of Brahman he is not so successful in establishing the saying "All this is Brahman." The position is reversed as regards Shaiva-Shākta Darshana which puts forth its doctrine of Mâyā Shakti with greater simplicity. Shākta doctrine takes the saying "All this is Brahman" (the realisation of which, as the Mahānirvāna states, is the aim and end of Kulāchāra) in its literal sense. "This" is the universe. Then the universe is Brahman. But Brahman is Consciousness. Then the universe is really that. But in what way? Shankara says that what we sense with our senses is Mâyā which is practically something, but in a real sense nothing; which yet appears to be something because it is associated with the Brahman which is alone Real. Its appearance of reality is thus borrowed and is in a sense (when that term is rightly understood) "illusive." When, therefore, we say "All this is Brahman" according to Shankara this means that what is at the back of that which we see is Brahman, the rest or

appearance is Mâyâ. Again according to Shankara man is spirit (Âtmâ) vested in the mâyik falsities of mind and matter. He, accordingly, can then only establish the unity of Īshvara and Jīva by eliminating from the first Mâyâ and from the second Avidyâ; when Brahman is left as a common denominator. The Shākta, however, eliminates nothing. For him in the strictest sense "All is Brahman." For him man's spirit (Âtmâ) is Shiva. His mind and body are Shakti. But Shiva and Shakti are one. Paramâtma is Shiva-Shakti in undistinguishable union. Jīvâtma is Shiva-Shakti in that state in which the self is distinguished from the not-self. Man, therefore, according to the Shākta Tantra is not Spirit seemingly clothed by a non-brahman falsity but spirit covering Itself with its own power or Mâyâ-Shakti. All is Shakti whether as Chit-Shakti or Mâyâ-Shakti. When, therefore, the Tāntrika Shākta says "All this is Brahman" he means it literally. "This" here means Brahman as Shakti; in appearance Mâyâ-Shakti; in itself Chit-Shakti.

Shiva as Parabrahman is Shiva-Shakti in that state when Shakti is not operating and in which She is Herself; that is pure consciousness (Chidrûpini). Shiva as Īshvarî is Shiva-Shakti in that state in which Shiva through Mâyâ-Shakti is the source of movement and change and as such (though still in itself changeless) is called Shakti. Shiva-Shakti as Jīva is the state produced by such action which is subject to Mâyâ from which Īshvara the Mâyin is free. The creative Shakti is therefore changeless Chit-Shakti and changing Mâyâ-Shakti. Yet the One Shakti must never be conceived as existing apart from, or without the other, for they are only twin aspects of the fundamental Substance (Paravastu). Vimarsha-Shakti as Mâyâ-Shakti produces the forms in which spirit as Chit-Shakti inheres and which it illuminates (Prakâsha). But Mâyâ-Shakti is not unconscious. How can it be; for it is Shakti and one with Chit-Shakti. All Shakti is and must be consciousness. There is no unconscious Mâyâ which is not Brahman and yet not separate from Brahman. Brahman alone is and exists whether as Chit or as manifestation or Mâyâ. All is consciousness as the so-called "New Thought" of the West also affirms.

But surely it will be said there is an unconscious element in things. How is this accounted for if there be no unconscious Mâyâ. It is conscious Shakti veiling Herself and so appearing as limited consciousness. In other words, whilst Shankara says mind and matter are in themselves unconscious but appear to be conscious through Chidābhāsa; the Shākta reverses the position and says that they are

themselves that is in their ground, conscious for they are at base Chit but they yet appear to be unconscious, or more strictly limited consciousness, by the veiling power of Consciousness Itself as Mâyâ-Shakti. This being so there is no need for Chidâbhâsa which assumes as it were two things the Brahman and Mâyâ in which the former reflects itself. Brahman is Mâyâ-Shakti in that aspect in which it negates itself for it is the function of Shakti to negate (Nishedha-vyâpâra-rûpâ shaktih). In the Shâkta Tantras it is a common saying of Shiva to Devi "There is no difference between Me and Thee." Whilst Shangkara's Ishvara is associated with the unconscious Mâyâ the Shaiva Shâkta's Ishvara is never associated with anything but Himself that is as Mâyâ-Shakti.

Whether this doctrine be accepted as the final solution of things or not, it is both glorious and immensely powerful. It is glorious because the whole world is seen in glory according to the strictest monism as the manifestation of Him and Her. The mind is not distracted and kept from the realisation of unity by the notion of any unconscious Mâyâ which is not Brahman nor yet separate from It. It is true that the Vedânta speaks of Mâyâ as a Shakti of Ishvara. But this seems to me (as it may do to others) to put a strained sense upon the term Shakti. At any rate all discussion is avoided. Nextly, this doctrine accomodates itself to Western scientific monism, so far as the latter goes, adding to it however a religious and metaphysical basis; infusing it with the spirit of deep thought and devotion. It is powerful because its standpoint is the here and now and not the transcendental *Siddhi* standpoint of which most of us know nothing and cannot, outside Samâdhi, realise. It assumes the reality of the world which to us is real. It allows the mind to work in its natural channel. It does not ask it to deny what goes against the grain of its constitution to deny. It is again powerful because we stand firmly planted on a basis which is real and natural to us. From the practical view point it does not ask man to eschew and flee from the world in the spirit of asceticism; a course repugnant to a large number of modern minds, not only because mere asceticism often involves what it thinks to be a futile self-denial; but because that mind is waking to the truth that all is one; that if so, to deny the world is in a sense to deny an aspect of That which is both Being and Becoming. It thinks also that whilst some natures are naturally ascetic, to attempt ascetic treatment in the case of most is to contort the natural being and to intensify the very evils which asceticism seeks to avoid. Not one man in many thousands has true

Vaiśya. Again there are many minds which are puzzled and confused by Māyāvāda and which, therefore, falsely interpret it, may be to their harm. These, men, Māyāvāda, or rather their misunderstanding of it, weakens or destroys.

Their grip on themselves and the world is in any case enfeebled. They become intellectual and moral derelicts who are neither on the path of power nor renunciation who have neither the strength to follow worldly life, nor to truly abandon it. It is not necessary, however, to renounce when all is seen to be *Her*. And when all is so seen then the spiritual illumination which transfuses all thoughts and acts make them noble and pure. It is impossible for a man who truly sees God in all things to err. If he does so, it is because his vision is not fully strong and pure; and to this extent scope is afforded to error. But given perfect spiritual eyesight then all "this" is pure. For as the Greeks profoundly said "panta kathara tois katharois" "to the pure all things are pure." The Shākta doctrine is thus one which has not only grandeur but is intensely pragmatic and of excelling worth. It has always been to me a surprise that its value should not have been rightly appreciated. I can only suppose that its neglect is due to the fact that it is the doctrine of the Shākta Tantras. That fact has been to most enough to warrant its rejection, or at least a refusal to examine it. Like all practical doctrines it is also intensely *positive*. There are none of those negations which weaken and which annoy those who, as the vital Western mind does, feel themselves to be strong and living in an atmosphere of might and power. For power is a glorious thing. What only is wanted is the sense that all Power is of God and is God and that Bhāva or feeling which interprets all thoughts and acts and their objects in terms of the Divine and which sees God in and as all things. Those who truly do so will exercise power not only without wrong but with that compassion (Karuna) for all beings which is so beautiful a feature of the Buddha of northern and Tantrik Buddhism. For in them Shakti Herself has descended. This is Shaktipāta, as it is technically called in the Tantra Śāstra; the descent of Shakti which Western theology calls the grace of God. But grace is truly not some exterior thing though we may think of it as streaming from above below. *Ātma* neither comes nor goes. It is truly man himself in that state in which he commences to realise himself as Shiva-Shakti. His power is, to use a western phrase, "converted." It is turned from the husk of mere outwardness and of limited self-seeking to that inner Reality.

Self Which, at base, he in truth is

The principles of Shákti doctrine which will vary according to race is a regenerating doctrine giving strength where there is weakness and where strength exists directing it to right ends. "Shivoham" "I am Shiva" "Sáham" "I am She (the Devi)" the Tantras say. The Western may call It by some other name. But names matter not. Some call It this and some that, as the Veda says. "I am He" I am She "I am It" matters not so long as man identifies himself with the Oversoul and and thus harmonizes himself with its Being, with its Dharmic actions (as it manifests in the world) and therefore necessarily with Its true ends. In its complete form the Shákta doctrine is monistic; but those to whom monism makes no appeal, who have not known the hunger for Unity which joyously afflicts other minds, may yet, by adopting its spirit, so far as the forms of their belief and worship allow, experience a reflection of the joy and strength of those who truly live because they worship Her who is Eternal life—the Mother who is seated on the couch of Shivas (Mahápretâ) in the Isle of gems (Manidvîpa) in the "Ocean of Nectar" which is all Being-consciousness and Bliss.

This is the pearl which those who have churned the ocean of Tantra discover. That pearl is there in an Indian shell. There is a beautiful naacre on the inner shell which is the Mother of Pearl. Outside, the shell is naturally rough and coarse and bears the accretions of weed and parasite and of things of all kind which exist, good or bad as we call them, in the ocean of existence (Sangsâra). Remove these accretions; pass within through the crust gross, though not on that account only bad (for there is a gross (Sthûla) and subtle (Sûkshma) aspect of worship): seek then to see the Mother of Pearl and lastly the Pearl which, enclosed therein, shines with the brilliant yet soft light which is that of the Moon-Chit (Chichehandra) Itself.

## SHAKTI &amp; MĀYĀ.

In the Eighth Chapter of the unpublished Sammohana Tantra it is said that Shangkara manifested on earth in the form of Shangkarāchāryya in order to root out Buddhism from India. It compares his disciples to the five Mahāpreta (who form the couch on which the Mother of the Worlds rests) and identifies his Maths with the Āmnāyas namely the Govardhana in Puri with Pārvāmāya, (the Sampradaya being Bhogabāra,) and so on with the rest. Whatever be the claims of Shangkara as destroyer of the great Buddhistic heresy, which owing to its subtlety was the most dangerous antagonist which the Vedānta has ever had, or his claims as expounder of Upanishad from the standpoint of Siddhi, his Māyāvāda finds no place in the Tantras of the Āgamas, for the doctrine and practice is given from the standpoint of Sādhana. It is true that in actual fact we often give accommodation to differing theories for which logic can find no living room, but it is obvious that in so far as man is a worshipper he must accept the world-standpoint if he would not, like Kālidāsa, cut from beneath himself the branch of the tree on which he sits. Nextly it would be a mistake to overlook the possibility of the so-called "Tantrik" tradition having been fed by ways of thought and practice which were not, in the strict sense of the term, part of the Vaidik cult, or in the line of its descent. The worship of the Great Mother, the Magna Mater of the near East, the Ādya Shakti of the Tantras, is in its essentials (as I have elsewhere pointed out) one of the oldest and most widespread religions of the world, and one which in this country was possibly in its origins independent of the Brahmanic religion as presented to us in the Vaidik Samhitās and Brāhmanas. If this be so it was later on undoubtedly mingled with the Vedānta tradition so that the Shākta faith of to-day is a particular presentation of the general Vedāntik teaching. This is historical speculation from an outside standpoint. As the Sarvollāsa of Sarvānandanātha points out, and as is well known to all adherents of the Shākta Āgamas, Veda in its general sense includes these and other Shāstras in what is called the great Shatakoti Samhitā. Whatever be the origins of the doctrine (and this should not be altogether overlooked in any proper appreciation of it), I am here concerned with its philosophical aspect as then to be to-day in the teachings and practice of the Shākta branch of the Āgama. This teaching occupies in some sense a middle place between the dualism of the Sāṅkhya and Shangkara's ultra-monistic interpretation of Vedānta.



which, unless otherwise stated, I refer. Both the Shaiva and Shākta schools accept the threefold aspect of the Supreme known as Prakāsha, Vimarsha, Prakāsha-vimarsha; called in Tantrik worship "The Three Feet" (Charana-tritaya). Both adopt the Thirty-six Tattvas, Shiva, Shakti, Sadāshiva, īshvara and Shuddhavidyā preceding the Purusha Prakriti Tattvas with which the Sāṅkhya commences. For whereas these are the ultimāte Tattvas in that Philosophy, the Shaiva and Shākta schools claim to show how Purusha and Prakriti are themselves derived from higher Tattvas. These latter Tattvas are also dealt with from the Shabda side as Shakti, Nāda, Bindu and as Kalās which are the Kriyā of the various grades of Tattvas which are aspects of Shakti. The Shākta Tantras such as the Saubhāgya-ratnākara and other works speak of 94 of such Kalās appropriate to Sadāshiva, īshvara, Rudra, Vishnu, and Brahmā, "Sun", "Moon", and "Fire", (indicated in the form of the Ram Bija with Chandrabindu transposed) of which 51 are Mātrika Kalās being the subtle aspects of the gross letters of the Sanskrit alphabet. This last is the Mimāṅsaka doctrine of Shabda adapted to the doctrine of Shakti. Common also to both Shākta and Shaiva Sampradāyas is the doctrine of the Shadadhvā.

I am not however here concerned with these details but with the general concept of Shakti which is their underlying basis. It is sufficient to say that Shākta doctrine is a form of Advaitavāda. In reply to the question what is 'silent concealment' (goptavyam) it is said:—*Ātmāhambhāva-bhāvanāyā bhāvayitavyam ityārtha*. Hitherto greater pains have been taken to show the differences between the Darshanas than, by regarding their points of agreement, to co-ordinate them systematically. So far as the subject of the present article is concerned, all three systems Sāṅkhya, Māyāvāda, Shaktivāda, are in general agreement as to the nature of the formless Consciousness and posit therewith a finitising principle called Prakriti, Māyā, and Shakti respectively. The main points on which Sāṅkhya (at any rate in what has been called its classical form) differs from Māyāvāda Vedānta is in its two doctrines of the plurality of Ātmans on the one hand and the reality and independence of Prakriti on the other. When however we examine these two Sāṅkhya doctrines closely we find them to be mere accommodations to the infirmity of common thought. A Vedantic conclusion is concealed within its dualistic presentment. For if each liberated Mukta Purusha is all pervading (Vibhu), and if there is not the slightest difference between one and another what is the

actual or practical difference between such pluralism and the doctrine of Ātmā? Again it is difficult for the ordinary mind to conceive that objects cease to exist when consciousness of objects ceases. The mind naturally conceives of their existing for others, although according to the hypothesis it has no right to conceive anything at all. But here again what do we find? In liberation Prakriti ceases to exist for the Mukta Purusha. In effect what is this but to say with Vedānta that Māyā is not a real independent category (Padārtha)? In Sāṅkhya the Purusha principle represents the formless consciousness and Prakriti formative activity. Shangkarā, defining Reality as that which exists as the same in all the three times, does not altogether discard these two principles but says that they cannot exist as two independent Realities. He thus reduces the two categories of Sāṅkhya, the Purusha Consciousness and Prakriti Unconsciousness to one Reality the Brahman; otherwise the Vākya "all is Brahman" (Sarvam khalvidam Brahma) is falsified. Brahman however in one aspect is dissociated from, and in another associated with, Māyā, which in his system takes the place of the Sāṅkhyan Prakriti. But whereas Prakriti is an independent Reality, Māyā is something which is neither real (Sat) nor unreal (Asat) nor partly real and partly unreal (Sadasat), and which though, not forming part of Brahman, and therefore not Brahman, is yet, though not a second reality, inseparately associated and sheltering with, Brahman (Māyābrahmāśritā) in one of its aspects: owing what false appearance of reality it has, to the Brahman with which it is so associated. It is an Eternal Falsity (Mithyābhūtā sanātani) unthinkable, alogical, unexplainable (Anirvachanīya). In other points the Vedantic Māyā and Sāṅkhyan Prakriti agree. Though Māyā is not a second reality but a mysterious something of which neither reality nor unreality can be affirmed, the fact of positing it at all gives to Shangkarā's doctrine a tinge of dualism from which the Shākta theory is free. According to Sāṅkhya, Prakriti is real although it changes. This question of reality is one of definition. Both Mālaprakriti and Māyā are eternal. The world, though a changing thing, has at least empirical reality in either view. Both are unconsciousness. Consciousness is reflected on or in unconsciousness: that is to state one view for, as is known, there is a difference of opinion. The light of Purusha-Consciousness (Chit) is thrown on the Prakriti-Unconsciousness (Achit) in the form of Buddhi. Vijnānabhikṣu speaks of a mutual reflection. The Vedāntic Prativimbavādins say that Ātmā is reflected in Antahkaraṇa, and the apparent likeness of the world is produced by such a reflection.

Jiva This ques on of (h dābhāsa is one of the main points of difference between Mayāvāda and Shakti-vāda. Notwithstanding that Māyā is a falsity, it is not, according to Shankara, a mere negation or want of something (Abhāva) but a positive entity (Bhavārupamajñānam): that is it is in the nature of a power which veils (Āchchhādaka) consciousness, as Prakriti, does in the case of Purusha. The nature of the great "Unexplained" as it is in Itself, and whether we call it Prakriti or Māyā, is unknown. The Yoginīhrīdaya Tantra beautifully says that we speak of the Heart of Yoginī who is Knower of Herself (Yoginī svavid) because the heart is the place whence all things issue. "What man" it says "knows the heart of a woman? Only Shiva knows the Heart of Yoginī". But from Shruti and its effects it is said to be one, all-pervading, eternal, existing now as seed and now as fruit, unconscious, composed of Gunas (Gunamayī); unperceivable except through its effects, evolving (Parināmī) these effects which are its products; that is the world, which however assumes in each system the character of the alleged cause; that is in Sāṅkhya the effects are real, in Vedānta, neither real or nor unreal. The forms psychic or physical arise in both cases as conscious unconscious (Sadāsāt) effects from the association of Consciousness (Purusha or Īshvara) with Unconsciousness (Prakriti or Māyā). Miyate anena iti Māyā. Māyā is that by which forms are made. This too is the function of Prakriti. Māyā as the collective name of the eternal ignorance (Ajñāna) produces, as the Prapanchashakti, these forms by first veiling (Āvaranashakti) Consciousness in ignorance and then projecting these forms (Vikshepa-shakti) from the store of the cosmic Sangskāras. But what is the Tamas Guna of the Sāṅkhyan Prakriti in effect but pure Avidyā? Sattva is the tendency to reflect consciousness and therefore to reduce unconsciousness. Rajas is the activity (Kriyā) which moves Prakriti or Māyā to manifest in its Tāmasik and Sāttvik aspect. Avidyā means "na vidyate", "is not seen", and therefore does not exist. Chit in association with Māyā does not see Itself as such. The first experience of the Soul reawakening after dissolution to world experience is "There is nothing" until the Sangskāras arise from out this massive Ignorance. In short Prakriti and Māyā are like the *materia prima* of the Thomistic philosophy the *finitising* principle; the activity which "measures out" (Miyate) that is limits and *makes forms* in the *formless* (Chit.)

In one respect Māyāvāda is a more consistent presentation of Advaitavāda than the Shākta doctrine to which we now proceed. For whilst Shankara's system like all others posits the doctrine of aspects,

saying that in one aspect the Brahman is associated with Māyā (īshvara) and that in another it is not (Parabrahman); yet in neither aspect does his Brahman change. In Shākta doctrine Shiva does in one aspect (Shakti) change. Brahman is changless and yet changes. But as change is only experienced by Jīvātmā subject to Māyā, there is not perhaps substantial difference between such a statement and that which affirms changelessness and only seeming change. In other respects however, to which I now proceed, Shākta doctrine is a more monistic presentation of Advaitavāda. If one were asked its most essential characteristic, the reply should be its rejection of the concept of unconscious Māyā as taught by Shankara. Shruti says "all is Brahman". Brahman is Consciousness: and therefore all is consciousness. There is no second thing called Māyā which is not Brahman even though it be "not real" "not unreal"; a definition obviously given to avoid the imputation of having posited a second Real. To speak of Brahman and Māyā which is not Brahman is to speak of two categories, however much it may be sought to explain away the second by saying that it is "not real" and "not unreal"; a falsity which is yet eternal and so forth. Like a certain type of modern Western "New Thought", Shākta doctrine affirms "all is consciousness" however much unconsciousness appears in it. With the boldness and certainty born of a Sādhakas insight, the Kaulāchāryya Sadānanda says in his commentary on the 4th Mantra of īsha Upanishad. "The changeless Brahman, which is consciousness appears in creation as Māyā which is Brahman, (Brahmamayī), consciousness (Chidrāpini) holding in Herself unbeginning (Anādi) Karmik tendencies (Karmasangskāra) in the form of the three Gunas. Hence She is Gunamayī despite being Chinmayī. As there is no second principle these Gunas are 'Chit-Shakti.' The Supreme Devi is thus prakāshavimarsha-sāmarasyarūpini.

According to Shankara, man is a Spirit (Ātmā) vested in the Māyik falsities of mind and matter. He accordingly can only establish the unity of īshvara and Jīva by eliminating from the first Māyā and from the second Avidyā; when Brahman is left as common denominator. The Shākta eliminates nothing. Man's spirit or Ātmā is Shiva, His mind and body are Shakti. Shakti and Shiva are one. The Jīvātmā is Shiva-Shakti. So is the Paramātmā. This latter exists as the one: the former as the manifold. Man is then not a

spirit covered by a non Brahman falsity but Spirit covering itself with

What then is Shakti and how does it come about that there is some principle of unconsciouness in things, a fact which cannot be denied. Shakti comes from the root "shak" "to be able", "to have power". It may be applied to any form of activity. The power to see is visual Shakti, the power to burn is Shakti of fire and so forth. These are all forms of activity which are ultimately reducible to the Primordial Shakti (Ādyā Shakti) whence every other form of power proceeds. She is called Yoginī because of Her connection with all things as their origin. It is this original Power which is known in worship as Devī or Mother of Many Names. Those who worship the Mother, worship nothing "illusory" or unconscious, but a Supreme Consciousness, whose body is all forms of consciousness-unconsciousness produced by Her as Shiva's power. Philosophically the Mother or Daivashakti is the kinetic aspect of the Brahman. All three systems recognise that there is a static and kinetic aspect of things: Puruṣa, Brahman, Shiva on the one side; Prakṛiti, Māyā, Shakti on the other. This is the time-honoured attempt to reconcile the doctrine of a changeless Spirit, a changing Manifold, and the mysterious unity of the two. For Power (Shakti) and the possessor of the Power (Shaktimān) are one and the same. In the Tantras Shiva constantly says to Devī "There is no difference between Thee and Me." We say that the fire burns, but burning is fire. Fire is not one thing and burning another. In the supreme transcendental changeless state, Shiva and Shakti exist, for Shiva is never without Shakti. The connection is that called Avinabhāvasambandha. Consciousness is never without its Power. Power is active Brahman or consciousness. But as there is then no activity they exist in the supreme state as one Tattva (Ekam tattvam iva); Shiva as Chit, Shakti as Chidrūpī. This is the state before the thrill of Nāda, the origin of all those currents of force which are the universe. According to Shaṅkara the Supreme Experience contains no trace or seed of objectivity whatever. In terms of speech it is an abstract consciousness (Jñāna). According to the view here expressed, which has been, profoundly elaborated by the Kashmir Śaīva school, that which appears "without" only so appears because it, in some form or other, exists "within". So also the Śākta Viśvasāra Tantra says "what is here is there, what is not here is nowhere." If therefore we know duality, it must be because the potentiality of it exists in that from which it arises. The Śaivashākta schools thus assume a real derivation of the universe and a causal nexus between Brahman and the world. According to Shaṅkara this

notion of creation is itself Mâyâ and there is no need to find a cause for it. So it is held that the supreme experience (Ânandha) is by the Self (Shiva) of Himself as Shakti, who as such is the Ideal or Perfect Universe; not in the sense of a perfected world of form but of that ultimate formless feeling (Bhâva) of Bliss (Ânanda) or Love which at root the whole world is. All is Love and by Love all is attained. The Shâkta Tantras compare the state immediately prior to creation with that of a grain of gram (Chanaka) wherein the two seeds (Shiva and Shakti) are held as one under the single sheath. There is, as it were a Mithuna in this unity of dual aspect, the thrill of which is Nâda giving birth to Bindu. When the sheath breaks and the seeds are pushed apart, the beginning of a dichotomy is established in the one consciousness, whereby the "I" and the "This" (Idam or Universe) appear as separate. The specific Shiva aspect, is, when viewed through Mâyâ, the Self, and the Shakti aspect, the Not-self. This is to the limited consciousness only. In truth the two Shiva and Shakti are ever one and the same, and never dissociated. Thus each of the Bindus of the Kâmakalâ are Shiva-Shakti appearing as Purusha-Prakriti. At this point Shakti assumes several forms of which the two chief are Chit-Shakti or Chit as Shakti and Mâyâ Shakti or Mâyâ as Shakti. Mâyâ is not here a mysterious unconscious non-Brahman non-real non-unreal something. It is a form of Shakti, and Shakti is Shiva who is Consciousness which is real. Therefore Mâyâ Shakti is in itself (Svarûpa) Consciousness and Brahman. Being Brahman It is real. It is that aspect of conscious power which conceals Itself to Itself. "By veiling the own true form (Svarûpa=Consciousness,) its Shaktis always arise"; as the Spandakârikâ says (Svarûpâvarâne châsyâ shaktayah satatottithâ). This is a common principle in all doctrine relating to Shakti. Indeed this theory of veiling, though expressed in another form, is common to Sâṅkhya and Vedânta. The difference lies in this, that in Sâṅkhya it is a second independent Principle which veils; in Mâyâvâda Vedânta it is the non-brahman Mâyâ (called in perhaps a somewhat strained fashion a Shakti of Īshvara) which veils; and in Shâkta Advaitavâda (for the Shâktas are monists) it is Consciousness which, without ceasing to be such yet, veils Itself. As already stated the Monistic Shaivas and Shâktas hold certain doctrines in common such as the 36 Tattvas and what are called Shadadhva which also appear as part of the teaching of the other Shaiva Schools. In the 36 Tattva scheme Mâyâ which is defined as "the sense of difference" for it is that which makes the Self see things as differ-

ent from the Self is technically that Tattva which appears at the close of the pure creation, that is after Shuddhavidyā. This Māyā reflects and limits in the Pashu or Jiva, the Ichchhā, Jñānā, Kriyā Shaktis of Ishvara. These again are the three Bindus which are "Moon" "Fire" and "Sun". What are Jñāna and Kriyā (including Ichchhā its preliminary) on the part of the Pati (Lord) in all beings and things (Bhāveshu) which are His body: it is these two which, together with Māyā the third, are the Sattva, Rajas and Tamas Gunas of the Pashu. This veiling power explains how the undubitable element of unconsciousness, which is seen in things exists. How, if all be consciousness, is that principle there? The answer is given in the luminous definition of Shakti; "It is the function of Shakti to negate" (Nishedha-vyāpārārūpa shaktih); that is to negate consciousness and make it appear to Itself as unconscious. In truth the whole world is the Self whether as "I" (Aham) or "This" (Idam). The Self thus becomes its own object. It becomes object or form that it may enjoy dualistic experience. It yet remains what it was in its unitary blissful experience. This is the Eternal play in which the Self hides and seeks itself. The formless cannot assume form unless formlessness is negated. Eternity is negated into finality; the all pervading into the limited; the all-knowing into the "little knower"; the almighty into the "little doer" and so forth. It is only by negating Itself to Itself that the Self becomes its own object in the form of the universe.

It follows from the above that to the Shākta worshipper there is no unconscious Māyā in Shangkara's sense and therefore there is no Chidābhāsa or the reflection of consciousness on unconsciousness, giving the latter the appearance of consciousness which it does not truly possess. For all is Consciousness as Shakti. "Ahamstri" as the Advaitabhavanopanishad exclaims. In short Shangkara says there is one Reality or consciousness and a not-real not-unreal unconsciousness. What is really unconscious appears to be conscious by the reflection of the light of consciousness upon it. Shākta doctrine says consciousness appears to be unconscious or more truly to have an element of unconsciousness in it (for nothing even empirically is absolutely unconscious) owing to the veiling play of Consciousness Itself as Shakti.

As with so many other matters, these apparent differences are to some extent a matter of words. It is true that the Vedantists speak of the conscious (Chetana) and unconscious (Achetana) but they, like the Shākta Advaitins say that the thing in itself is Consciousness. When this is vividly displayed by of the reflection (Prativimba

of consciousness a Tattva, (such as Buddhi) capable of displaying this reflection then we can call that in which it is so displayed conscious. Where, though consciousness is all pervading, Chaitanya is not so displayed there we speak of unconsciousness. Thus gross matter (Bhūta) does not reflect Chit and so appears to us as unconscious. Though all things are at base consciousness, some appear as more, and some as less, conscious. Shankara explains this by saying that Chaitanya is associated with a non-conscious mystery or Māyā which veils consciousness, and Chaitanya gives to what is unconscious the appearance of consciousness through reflection. "Reflection" is a form of pictorial thinking. What is meant is that two principles are associated together without the nature (Svarūpa) of either being really affected, and yet producing that effect which is Jīva. Shākta doctrine says that all is consciousness, but this same consciousness assumes the appearance of changing degrees of unconsciousness, not through the operation of anything other than itself (Māyā), but by the operation of one of its own powers (Māyāshakti). It is not unconscious Māyā in Shankara's sense which veils consciousness, but Consciousness as Shakti veils Itself, and as so functioning is called Māyāshakti. It may be asked how can Consciousness become Unconsciousness and cease to be itself? The answer is that it does not. It never ceases to be Consciousness. It appears to itself as Jīva to be otherwise, and even then not wholly: for as recent scientific investigations have shown, even so called "brute matter" exhibits the elements of that which, when evolved in man, is self-consciousness. If it be asked how consciousness can obscure itself partially or at all; the only answer is Achintyā Shakti, which Māyāvādins as all other Vedantists admit. Of this, as of all ultimates, we must say with the Scholastics "omnia exeunt in mysterium."

Prakriti is then according to Sāṅkhya a real independent category different from Puruṣa. This both Māyāvāda and Shaktivāda deny. Māyā is a not real, not-unreal Mystery dependent on, and associated with, and inhering in, Brahman; but not Brahman or any part of Brahman. Māyāshakti is not different from Shiva, is real, and is an aspect of Brahman Itself. Whilst Brahman as Īshvara is associated with Māyā, Shiva is never associated with anything but Himself. But the function of all three is the same, namely to make forms in the formless. It is That by which the Īshvara or Collective Consciousness pictures the universe for the individual Jīva's experience. Shakti is Will (Ichchā), Knowledge (Jñāna) and action (Kriyā).



All three are but differing aspects of the one Shakti. Consciousness and its power or action are at base the same. It is true that action is manifested in matter, that is apparent unconsciousness, but its root, as that of all else, is consciousness. Jñāna is self-proved and experienced (Svatasiddha) whereas Kriyā, being inherent in bodies, is perceived by others than ourselves. The characteristic of action is the manifestation of all objects. These objects again characterised by consciousness-unconsciousness are in the nature of a shining forth (Ābhāsa) of Consciousness. Here Ābhāsa is not used in its sense of Chit sadriśa, but as an intensive form of the term Bhāsa. The power of activity and knowledge are only differing aspects of one and the same Consciousness. According to Shankara, Brahman has no form of self-determination. Kriyā is a function of unconscious Māyā. When Ishvara is said to be a doer (Kartā) this is attributed (Aupādhika) to Him by ignorance only. It follows from the above that there are other material differences between Shākta doctrine and Māyāvāda, such as the nature of the Supreme Experience, the reality and mode of creation, the reality of the world, and so forth. The world it is true is not, as the Mahānirvāna Tantra says, absolute reality in the sense of unchanging being, for it comes and goes. It is nevertheless real, for it is the experience of Shiva and Shiva's experience is not unreal. Thus again the evolution of the world as Ābhāsa, whilst resembling the Vivarta of Māyāvāda, differs from it in holding, as the Sāṅkhya does, that the effect is real and not unreal, as Shankara contends. To treat of these and other matters would carry me beyond the scope of this article which only deals, and that in a summary way, with the essential differences and similarities in the concepts Prakriti, Māyā and Shakti.

I may however conclude with a few general remarks. The doctrine of Shakti is a profound one and I think likely to be attractive to Western minds when they have grasped it, just as they will appreciate the Tantrik watchword Kriyā or action, its doctrine of progress with and through the world and not against it, which is involved in its liberation-enjoyment (Bhukti-mukti) theory and other matters. The philosophy is in any case not as an American writer in his ignorance absurdly called it, "worthless", "religious Feminism run mad," and a "feminization of Vedānta for suffragette Monists". It is not a "feminization" of anything, but a distinctive, original, and practical doctrine worthy of a careful study. The Western student will find much in it which is more acceptable to generally prevalent thought in Europe and America—than in the "illusion doctrine (in itself an unsuitable term) and the

ascetic practice of the Vedântins of Saṅkara's school. This is not to say that ways of reconciliation may not be found by those who go far enough. It would not be difficult to show ground for holding that ultimately the same intellectual results are attained by viewing the matter from the differing stand points of Sādhana and Siddhi.

The writer of an interesting article on the same subject in the *Prabuddha Bhārata* (August 1916) states that the Sannyāsi Totapuri the Guru of Śrī Rāmakrishna maintained that a (Māyāvādin) Vedantist could not believe in Shakti for if causality itself be unreal there is no need to admit any power to cause, and that it is Māyā to apply the principle of causation and to say that everything comes from Shakti. The Sannyāsi was converted to Shākta doctrine after all. For as the writer well says, it is not merely by intellectual denial but by *living* beyond the "unreal" that the Real is found. He however goes on to say "the Shaktivāda of Tantra is not an improvement on the Māyāvāda of Vedānta, (why of Vedānta, rather doctrine of Saṅkara?) but only its symbolisation through the chromatics of sentiment and concept." It is true that it is a form of Vedānta, for all which is truly Indian must be that. It is also a fact that the Āgama as a Shāstra of worship is full of Symbolism. Intellectually however it is an original presentment of Vedānta, and from the practical point of view, it has some points of merit which Māyāvāda does not possess. Varieties of teaching may be different presentations of one truth leading to a similar end. But one set of "chromatics" may be more fruitful than another for the mass of men. It is in this that the strength of the Shākta doctrine and practice lies.

Māyāvāda is a doctrine which, whether true or not, is fitted only for advanced minds of great intellectuality, and for men of ascetic disposition, and of the highest moral development. This is implied in its theory of competency (Adhikāra) for Vedāntic teaching. When as is generally the case it is not understood, and in some cases when it is understood; but is otherwise not suitable, it is liable to be a weakening doctrine. The Shākta teaching to be found in the Tantras has also its profundities which are to be revealed only to the competent, and contains a practical doctrine for all classes of worshippers (Sādhaka). It has, in this form for the mass of men a strengthening pragmatical value which is beyond dispute. Whether, as some may have contended, it is the fruit of a truer spiritual experience I will not here discuss, for this would lead me into a polemic beyond the scope of my present purpose, which is an impartial statement of the respective teachings, on one particular point, given by the three philosophical systems here

## THE ORIGIN OF MANTRA.

(MANTRAMAYĪ SHAKTI)

This is at one and the same time a most important as well as most difficult subject in the Tantra Shāstra ; so difficult that it is not understood and on this account has been ridiculed. Mantra in the words of a distinguished Indian has been called "meaningless jabber." When we find Indians thus talking of their Shāstra it is not surprising that Europeans should take it to be of no account. They naturally, though erroneously suppose, that the Indian always understands his own beliefs and if he says they are absurd it is taken that they are so. Even, however, amongst Indians, who have not lost themselves through an English Education, the Science of Mantra is largely unknown. There are not many students of the Mimāṃsa now-a-days. The English Educated have in this as in other matters generally taken the cue from their Western Gurus and passed upon Mantravidyā a borrowed condemnation. There are those among them (particularly in this part of India) who have in the past thought little of their old culture and have been only too willing to sell their old lamps for new ones. Because they are new they will not always be found to give better light. Let us hope this will change, as indeed it will. Before the Indian condemns his cultural inheritance let him at least first study and understand it. It is true that Mantra is meaningless—to those who do not know its meaning : but to those who do, it is not "Jabber"; though of course like everything else it may become, and indeed has become, the subject of ignorance and superstitious use. A telegram written in code in a merchants' office will seem the merest gibberish to those who do not know that code. Those who do may spell thereout a transaction bringing lakhs of Rupees for them who send it; and Rupees at least are very "real", though apt to be scarce, now-a-days. Whether it be true or not Mantravidyā is a profound science, and, as interpreted by the Shākta Āgama, is a practical application of Vedantic doctrine.

At any point in the flow of phenomena we can enter the stream and realise therein the changeless Real. The latter is everywhere and in all things and is hidden in, and manifested by, sound as by all else. Any form (and all which is not the Formless is that) can be pierced by the mind and union may be had therein with the Devatā who is at its core. It matters not what that form may be And why? What I have said

concerning Shakti gives the answer All is Shakti All is Consciousness. We desire to think and speak. This is Ichchhâ Shakti. We make an effort towards realization. This is Kriyâ Shakti. We think and know. This is Jnâna Shakti. Through Prâṇa-vāyu, another form of Shakti, we speak; and the word we utter is Shakti mantramayi. For what is a letter (Varna) which is made into syllables (Pada) and sentences (Vākya)? It may be heard in speech, thus affecting the sense of hearing. It may be seen as a form in writing. It may be tactually sensed by the blind through the perforated dots of Braille type. The same thing thus affects the various senses. But what is the thing which does so. The senses are Shakti and so is the objective form which evokes the sensation. Both are in themselves Shakti as Chit Shakti and Mâyâ Shakti and the Svarûpa of these is Chit or Feeling-Consciousness. When, therefore, a Mantra is realised; when there is what is called in the Shâstra Mantra-Chaitanya, what happens is the union of the consciousness of the Sâdhaka with that Consciousness which manifests in the form of the Mantra. It is this union which makes the Mantra "work."

The subject is of such importance in the Tantras that their other name is Mantra-Shâstra. But what is a Mantra? Commonly Orientalists and others describe Mantra as "Prayer," "Formulae of worship," "Mystic syllables" and so forth. These are but the superficialities of those who do not know their subject. Wherever we find the word "Mystic" we may be on our guard: for it is a word which covers much ignorance. Thus Mantra is said to be a "mystic" word; Yantra a "mystic" diagram and Mudrâ a "mystic" gesture. But have these definitions taught us anything? No, nothing. Those who framed these definitions knew nothing. And yet, whilst I am aware of no work in any European language which shows a knowledge of what Mantra is or of its science (Mantravidyâ), yet there is perhaps no subject which has been so ridiculed; a not unusual attitude of ignorance. There is a widely diffused lower mind which says "what I do not understand is absurd." But this science, whether well-founded or not, is not that. Those who so think might except Mantras which are prayers and the meaning of which they understand; for with prayer the whole world is familiar. But such appreciation itself displays a lack of understanding. A Mantra may be used as a prayer. But there is nothing necessarily holy or prayerful about Mantra as some think.

The word "Mantra" comes from the root "man" to think. It is the word of the great "Man" who alone of all creation is properly a

Thinker "Tra comes from the root *trā* for the effect of a Mantra when used with that end is to save him who utters and realises it. Mantra is thus Thought-movement vehicled by, and expressed in, speech. Its Svartūpa is, like all else, consciousness (*Chit*) which is the *Shabda-brahman*. A Mantra is not merely sound or letters. This is a form in which *Shakti* manifests Herself. The mere utterance of a Mantra without knowing its meaning and without realisation of the consciousness which Mantra manifests is a mere movement of the lips and nothing else. We are then in the outer husk of consciousness; just as we are when we identify ourselves with any other form of gross matter which is, as it were, the "crust" (as a friend of mine has aptly called it,) of those subtler forces which emerge from the *Yoni* or Cause of all who is in Herself Consciousness (*Chidrāpinī*). When the *Sādhaka* knows the meaning of the Mantra he makes an advance. But this is not enough. He must through his consciousness realise that Consciousness which appears in the form of the Mantra and thus attain Mantra-Chaitanya. At this point thought is vitalised by contact with the centre of all thinking. At this point again thought becomes truly vital and creative. Then an effect is created by the realisation thus induced.

The creative power of thought is now receiving increasing acceptance in the West which is in some cases taking over, and in others, discovering anew, for itself what was taught by the ancients in this country. Because they have discovered it anew they call it "New Thought"; but its fundamental principle is as old as the *Upanishads* which said "what you think that you become." All recognise this principle in the limited form that a man who thinks good becomes good and he who is ever harbouring bad thoughts becomes bad. But the Indian and "New thought" doctrine is more profound than this. In Vedantic India thought has been ever held creative. The world is a creation of the thought (*Chit shakti* associated with *Māyā Shakti*) of the Lord (*Ishvara* and *Ishvari*). Her and His thought is the aggregate, with almighty powers of all thought. But each man is *Shiva* and can attain His powers to the degree of his ability to consciously realise himself as such. Thought now works in man's small magic just as it first worked in the grand magical display of the World-Creator. Each man is in various degrees a creator. Thought is as real as any form of gross matter. Indeed it is more real in the sense that the world is itself a projection of the world-thought, which again is nothing but the aggregate in the form of the *Saṅskāras* or impressions of past experience which give

rise to the world. The universe exists for each Jiva because he consciously or unconsciously wills it. It exists for the totality of beings because of the totality of Sangskaras which are held in the Great Womb of the manifesting Chit Itself. There is theoretically nothing that man cannot accomplish for he is at base the Accomplisher of all. But in practice he can only accomplish to the degree that he identifies himself with the Supreme Consciousness and Its forces which underlie, are at work in, and manifest as the universe. This is the basal doctrine of all magic, of all powers (Siddhi) including the greatest Siddhi which is Liberation itself. He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman to the extent of his "knowing". Thought reading, thought transference, hypnotic suggestion, magical projections (Mokshana) and shields (Grahana) are becoming known and practised in the West, not always with good results. For this reasons some doctrines and practices are kept concealed. Projection (Mokshana) the occultist will understand. But Grahana, I may here explain, is not so much a "fence" in the Western sense, to which use a Kavacha is put, but the knowledge of how to "catch" a mantra thus projected. A stone thrown at one may be warded off or caught and if the person so wishes thrown back at him who threw it. So may a mantra. It is not necessary, however, to do so. Those who are sheltered by their own pure strength, automatically throw back all evil influences, which coming back to the ill-wisher harm or destroy him. Those familiar with the Western presentment of similar matters will more readily understand than those who like the Orientalist and Missionary know nothing of occultism and regard it as superstition. For this reason their presentment of Indian teaching is so often ignorant and absurd. The occultist, however, will understand the Indian doctrine which regards thought like mind, of which it is the operation, as a Power or Shakti; something, therefore, very real by which man can accomplish things for himself and others. Kind thoughts without a word will do good to all who surround us and may travel round the world to distant friends. So we may suffer from the ill-wishes of those who surround us even if such wishes do not materialise into deeds. Telepathy is the transference of thought from a distance without the use of the ordinary sense organs. So in initiation the thought of a true Grahana may pass to his disciple all his powers. Mantra is thus a Shakti (Mantra-shakti) which lends itself impartially to any use. Man can satisfy himself with any of nature's forces and for any end. Thus to effects of Mantra, it may be used to injure, kill

Mantra-shakti, of nature with the physical Shakti.

is by some said to be effected. So the Vishnu-Purāṇa speaks of generation by will power, as some Westerns believe will be the case when man passes beyond the domination of his gross sheath and its physical instruments. Children will then again be "mind-born". By Mantra the Homa fire may be lit. By Mantra, again, in the Tantrik initiation called Vedha-dīkshā there is such a transference of power from the Guru to his disciple that the latter swoons under the impulse of the thought-power which pierces him. But the spiritual aspect of Mantra is that from which it derives its suffix (trāyate) and by which man identifies himself with That which is the ground of all spiritual thought. In short Mantra is a power (Shakti) in the form of idea clothed with sound. What, however, is not yet understood in the West is the particular Thought-science which is Mantravidyā or its basis. Much of the "New thought" lacks this philosophical basis which is supplied by Mantra-vidyā resting itself on the Vedantik doctrine. Mantra-vidyā is thus that form of Sādhana by which union is had with the Mother Shakti in the Mantra form (Mantramayī) which leads to Her Sthitā and Sūkshma aspects respectively. The Sādhaka passes from the first to the second. This Sādhana works through the letters as other forms of Sādhana work through form in the shape of the Yantra, Ghata or Pratima. All such Sādhana belongs to Shāktopaya Yoga as distinguished from the introspective meditative processes of Shāmbhavopaya which seeks more directly the realisation of Shakti; the end common to both. The Tantrik doctrine as regards Shabda is that of the Mimāṃsa with this exception that it is modified to meet its main doctrine of Shakti.

In order to understand what a Mantra is, we must know its cosmic history. The mouth speaks a word. What is it and whence has it come? As regards the evolution of consciousness as the world I refer you to my lectures on 'Chit-shakti and Māyā-shakti' dealing with the 36 Tattvas. Ultimately there is consciousness which in its aspect as the great "I" sees the object as part of itself and then as other than itself and thus has experience of the universe. This is achieved through Shakti who in the words of the Kāmaka-lāvilāsa is the pure mirror in which Shiva experiences Himself (Shivarūpa-vimarsha-nirmalādarsha). Neither Shiva nor Shakti alone suffice for creation. Shivarūpa here = Svarūpa = Aham ityevamākāram, that is the form (of experience) which consists in the notion of "I". Shakti is the pure mirror for the manifestation of Shiva's experiences as "I" (Aham). Aham ityevam rūpam jñānam tasya prakāshane nirmalādarsha: as the commentator Amṛtānanda (V 2) says. The notion is of course similar to that of the reflection

of Purusha on Prakṛti as Sa tvamayi Buddhi and of Brahman on Maya. From the Mantra (śakti) śa ng f a ha ri (Shakti Tattva) associated with Shiva (Shiva Tattva) there was produced Nāda and from Nāda, came Bindu which to distinguish it from other Bindus is known as the causal, supreme or Great Bindu (Kāraṇa, Para, Mahābindu). This is very clearly set forth in the Śārādā Tilaka a Tantrik work by an author of the Kashmirian School which was formerly of great authority among the Bengal Śāktas. I have dealt with this subject in detail in my "Studies in the Mantra Śāstra". Here I only summarise conclusions.

The Śārādā says—From the Sakala Parameshvara who is Sachchidānanda issued Shakti; from Shakti came Nāda; and from Nāda issued Bindu.

*Sachchidānandavibhavāt sakalāt parameshvarāt  
astichhaktistato nādo nādāt bindusamudbhavah.*

Here the Sakala Parameshvara is Shiva Tattva. Shakti is Shakti Tattva wherein are Samant, Vyāpint and Ānjant Shaktis. Nāda is the first produced source of Mantra, and the subtlest form of Shabda of which Mantra is a manifestation. Nāda is threefold as Mahānāda or Nādānta and Nirodhini representing the first moving forth of the Shabda Brahman as Nāda, the filling up of the whole universe with Nādānta and the specific tendency towards the next state of unmanifested Shabda respectively. Nāda in its three forms is in the Sadākhyā Tattva. Nāda becoming slightly operative towards the "speakable" (Vāchya), [the former operation being in regard to the thinkable (Mantavya)] is called Ardhachandra which develops into Bindu. Both of these are in Īshvara Tattva. This Mahābindu becomes threefold as the Kāmakalā. The undifferentiated Shabdabrahman or Brahman as the immediate cause of the manifested Shabda and Artha is an unity of consciousness (Chaitanya) which then expresses itself in three-fold function as the three Shaktis, Ichchhā, Jñāna, Kriyā; the three Gunas Sattva, Rajas, Tamas; the three Bindus (Kāryya) which are Sun, Moon and Fire; the three Devatās, Rudra, Vishnu, Brahmā and so forth. These are the product of the union of Prakāsha and Vimarsha Shakti. This Triangle of Divine Desire is the Kāmakalā, or Creative Will and Its first subtle manifestation, the cause of the universe which is personified as the Great Devi Tripurasundari, the Kāmeshvara and Kāmeshvari the object of worship in the Āgamas. Kāmakalāvṛtā as explained in the work of that name is the manifestation of the union of Shiva and Shakti, the great 'I' (Āham).



which develops through the inherent power of Its thought-activity (Vimarsha Shakti) into the universe, losing as Jīva the knowledge of its true nature and the secret of its growth through Māyā-Shakti. Here then there appears the duality of subject and object; of mind and matter of the word (Shabda) and its meaning (Artha). The one is not the cause of the other, but each is inseparable from, and concomitant with, the other as a bifurcation of the undifferentiated unity or Shabdabrahman whence they proceed. The one cosmic movement produces at the same time the mind and the object which it cognises; names (Nāma) and language (Shabda) on the one hand; and forms (Rūpa) or object (Artha) on the other. These are all parts of one co-ordinated contemporaneous movement and therefore each aspect of the process is related the one to the other. The genesis of Shabda is only one aspect of the creative process namely that in which the Brahman is regarded as the Author of Shabda and Artha into which the undifferentiated Shabdabrahman divides Itself. Shakti is Shabdabrahman ready to create both Shabda and Artha on the differentiation of the Parabindu into the Kāmakalā which is the root (Mūla) of all Mantras. Shabdabrahman is Supreme "Speech" (Parā Vāk) or Supreme Shabda (Para Shabda). From this fourth state of Shabda there are three others—Pashyanti, Madhyamā and Vaikhari, which are the shabda aspect of the stages whereby the seed of formless consciousness explicates into the multitudinous concrete ideas (expressed in language) of the mental world the counterpart of the objective universe. But for the last three states of sound the body is required and, therefore, they only exist in the Jīva. In the latter the Shabdabrahman is in the form of Kundalini Shakti in the Mūlādhāra Chakra. In Kundalini is Parashabda. This develops into the "Mātrikā" or "Little Mothers" which are the subtle forms of the gross manifested letters (Varna). The letters make up syllables (Pada) and syllables make sentences (Vākya) of which elements the Mantra is composed. Para Shabda in the body developes into Pashyanti Shabda or Shakti of general movement (Āmānya Spanda) located in the tract from the Mūlādhāra to the Manipūra associated with Manas. It then in the tract upwards to the Anāhata becomes Madhyamā or Hiranyagarbha sound with particularised movement (Viśeṣa Spanda) associated with Buddhi-Tattva. Vāyu proceeding upwards to the throat expresses itself in spoken speech which is Vaikhari or Virāt Shabda. Now it is that the Mantra issues from the mouth and is heard by the ear. Because the one cosmic movement produces the ideating mind and its accompanying Shabda and the objects cognised or Artha, the ve

force of the universe is identified with the Mātrikās and Varnas, and Devī is said to be formed of the letters from A to Ha which are the gross expressions of the forces called Mātrikā; which again are not different from, but are the same forces which evolve into the universe of mind and matter. These Varnas are for the same reason associated with certain vital and physiological centres of the body the basis of psychological function which centres are produced by the same power which gives birth to the letters. It is by virtue of these centres and their controlled area in the body that all the phenomena of human psychosis run on and keep man in bondage. The creative force is the union of Shiva and Shakti and each of the letters (Varna) produced therefrom and thereby are part and parcel of that Force and are, therefore, Shiva and Shakti in those particular forms. For this reason the Tantra Shāstra says that Devatā and Mantra composed of letters, are one. In short, Mantras are made of letters, (Varna). Letters are Mātrikā. Mātrikā is Shakti and Shakti is Shiva. Through Shakti one with Shiva, Nāda-Shakti, Bindu Shakti, the Shabdabrahman or Para Shabda, arise the Mātrikā, Varna, Pada, Vākya of the lettered Mantra or manifested Shabda.

But what is Shabda or "Sound"? Here the Shākta Tantra Shāstra follows the Mimāṃsa doctrine of Shabda with such modifications as are necessary to adapt it to its doctrine of Shakti. Sound (Shabda) which is a quality (Guna) of ether (Ākāsha) and is sensed by hearing is twofold namely lettered (Varnātmaka Shabda) and unlettered or Dhvani (Dhvanātmaka Shabda). The latter is caused by the striking of two things together and is meaningless. Shabda on the contrary which is Anāhata (a term applied to the Heart Lotus) is that Brahman sound which is not caused by the striking of two things together. Lettered sound is composed of sentences (Vākya) words (Pada) and letters (Varna). Such sound has a meaning. Shabda manifesting as speech is said to be eternal. This the Naiyāyikas deny saying that it is transitory. A word is uttered and it is gone. This opinion the Mimāṃsa denies saying that the perception of lettered sound must be distinguished from lettered sound itself. Perception is due to Dhvani caused by the striking of the air in contact with the vocal organs namely the throat, palate and tongue and so forth. Before there is Dhvani there must be the striking of one thing against another. It is not the mere striking which is the lettered Shabda. This manifests it. The

by the formation of the vocal organs in

the body

to the mental movement or idea

which by the will the seeks outward expression in audible sound. It is this perception which is transitory for the Dhvani which manifests ideas in language is such. But lettered sound as it is in itself that is as the Consciousness manifesting as Idea expressed in speech is eternal. It was not produced at the moment it was perceived. It was only manifested by the Dhvani. It existed before, as it exists after, such manifestation just as a jar in a dark room which is revealed by a flash of lightning is not then produced, nor does it cease to exist on its ceasing to be perceived through the disappearance of its manifestor the lightning. The air in contact with the voice organs reveals sound in the form of the letters of the alphabet and their combinations in words and sentences. The letters are produced for hearing by the person desiring to speak and become audible to the ear of others through the operation of unlettered sound or Dhvani. The latter being a manifestor only, lettered Shabda is something other than its manifestor.

Before describing the nature of Shabda in its different forms of development it is necessary to understand the Indian psychology of perception. At each moment the Jiva is subject to innumerable influences which from all quarters of the Universe pour upon him. Only those reach his Consciousness which attract his attention and are thus selected by his Manas. The latter attends to one or other of these sense-impressions and conveys it to the Buddhi. When an object (Artha) is presented to the mind and perceived the latter is formed into the shape of the object perceived. This is called a mental Vritti (modification) which it is the object of Yoga to suppress. The mind as a Vritti is thus a representation of the outer subject. But in so far as it is such representation the mind is as much an object as the outer one. The latter that is the physical object is called the gross object (Sthūla artha) and the former or mental impression is called the subtle object (Sūkshma artha). But besides the object there is the mind which perceives it. It follows that the mind has two aspects in one of which it is the perceiver and in the other the perceived in the form of the mental formation (Vritti) which in creation precedes its outer projection and after the creation follows as the impression produced in the mind by the sensing of a gross physical object. The mental impression and the physical object exactly correspond for the physical object is in fact but a projection of the cosmic imagination though it has the same reality as the mind has; no more and no less. The mind is thus both (Grāhaka) and cognised (Grāhya) revealer (Prakāshaka) and revealed (Prakāshya) denoter (Vāchaka) and (Vāchya).

When the mind perceives an object it is transformed to the shape of that object. So the mind which thinks of the Divinity which it worships (Ishtadevatā) is at length through continued devotion transformed into the likeness of that Devatā. By allowing the Devatā thus to occupy the mind for long it becomes as pure as the Devatā. This is a fundamental principle of Tantrik Sādhana or religious practice. The object perceived is called Artha a term which comes from the root "Ri" which means to get to know, to enjoy. Artha is that which is known and which therefore is an object of enjoyment. The mind as Artha that is in the form of the mental impression is an exact reflection of the outer object or gross Artha. As the outer object is Artha so is the interior subtle mental form which corresponds to it. That aspect of the mind which cognises is called Shabda or Nāma (name) and that aspect in which it is its own object or cognised is called Artha or Rūpa (form). The outer physical object of which the latter is in the individual an impression is also Artha or Rūpa, and spoken speech is the outer Shabda. The mind is thus from the Mantra aspect Shabda and Artha, terms corresponding to the Vedantic Nāma and Rūpa or concepts and concepts objectified. As the Vedānta says the whole creation is Nāma and Rūpa. Mind as Shabda is the Power (Shakti) the function of which is to distinguish and identify (Bhedasangsargavritti Shakti).

Just as the body is causal, subtle and gross, so is Shabda, of which there are four states (Bhāva) called Parā, Pashyanti, Madhyamā and Vaikhari. Para sound is that which exists on the differentiation of the Mahābindu before actual manifestation. This is motionless causal Shabda in Kundalini in the Mūlādhara centre of the body. That aspect of it in which it commences to move with a general that is non-particularised motion (Sāmānya Spanda) is Pashyanti whose place is from the Mūlādhara to the Manipūra Chakra the next centre. It is here associated with Manas. These represent the motionless and first moving Ishvara aspect of Shabda. Madhyamā Shabda is associated with Buddhi. It is Hīranyagarbha sound (Hīranyagarbharūpa) extending from Pashyanti to the heart. Both Madhyamā Shabda which is the inner "naming" by the cognitive aspect of mental movement as also its Artha or subtle (Sūkshma) object (Artha) belong to the mental or subtle body (Sūkshma or Līnga sharīra). Perception is dependent on distinguishing and identification. In the perception of an object that part of the mind which identifies and distinguishes and thus "names" or the cog-

nizing part is, from the Shabda aspect subtle Shabda and that part of it which takes the shape of and thus constitutes the object (a shape which corresponds with the outer thing) is subtle Artha. The perception of an object is thus consequent on the simultaneous functioning of the mind in its twofold aspect as Shabda and Artha which are in indissoluble relation with one another as cogniser (Grāhaka) and cognised (Grāhya). Both belong to the subtle body. In creation Madhyamā Shabda first appeared. At that moment there was no outer Artha. Then the Cosmic Mind projected this inner Madhyamā Artha into the world of sensual experience and named it in spoken speech (Vaikhari Shabda). The last or Vaikhari Shabda is uttered speech developed in the throat issuing from the mouth. This is Virāt Shabda. Vaikhari Shabda is therefore language or gross lettered sound. Its corresponding Artha is the physical or gross object which language denotes. This belongs to the gross body (Sthūla sharīra). Madhyamā Shabda is mental movement or ideation in its cognitive aspect and Madhyamā Artha is the mental impression of the gross object. The inner thought-movement in its aspect as Shabdārtha and considered both in its knowing aspect (Shabda) and as the subtle known object (Artha) belongs to the subtle body (Sūkshma sharīra). The cause of these two is the first general movement towards particular ideation (Pashyanti) from the motionless cause Parā shabda or Supreme Speech. Two forms of inner or hidden speech, causal and subtle, accompanying mind movement thus precede and lead up to spoken language. The inner forms of ideating movement constitute the subtle, and the uttered sound the gross, aspect of Mantra which is the manifested Shabdabrahman.

The gross Shabda called Vaikhari or uttered speech and the gross Artha or the physical object denoted by that speech are the projection of the subtle Shabda and Artha through the initial activity of the Shabdabrahman into the world of gross sensual perception. Therefore in the gross physical world Shabda means language that is sentences, words and letters which are the expression of ideas and are Mantra. In the subtle or mental world Madhyamā Shabda is the Shabda aspect of the mind which "names" in its aspect as cogniser and Artha is the same mind in its aspect as the mental object of its cognition. It is defined to be the outer in the form of the mind. It is thus similar to the state of dreams (Svapna), as Parashabda is the causal dreamless (Sushupti) and Vaikhari the waking (Jāgrat) state. Mental Artha is a Sangskāra, an impression left on the subtle body by previous experience which is recalled when the Jiva reawakes to world experience and recollects the

experience temporarily lost in the cosmic dreamless state (Sushupti) which is destruction (Pralaya). What is it which arouses this Sangskāra? As an effect (Kriyā) it must have a cause (Kāraṇa). This Kāraṇa is the Shabda or Name (Nāma) subtle or gross corresponding to that particular Artha. When the word "Ghata" is uttered this evokes in the mind the image of an object namely a jar; just as the presentation of that object does. In the Hiranyagarbha state Shabda as Sangskāra worked to evoke mental images. The whole world is thus Shabda and Artha that is Name and Form (Nāma rūpa). These two are inseparably associated. There is no Shabda without Artha or Artha without Shabda. The Greek word Logos also means thought and word combined. There is thus a double line of creation, Shabda and Artha; ideas and language together with their objects. Speech as that which is heard or the outer manifestation of Shabda stands for the Shabda creation. The Artha creation are the inner and outer objects seen by the mental or physical vision. From the cosmic creative standpoint, the mind comes first and from it is evolved the physical world according to the ripened Sangskāras which led to the existence of the particular existing universe. Therefore the mental Artha precedes the physical Artha which is an evolution in gross matter of the former. This mental state corresponds to that of dreams (Svapna) when man lives in the mental world only. After creation which is the waking (Jāgrat) state there is for the individual an already existing parallelism of names and objects.

Uttered speech is a manifestation of the inner naming or thought. This thought-movement is similar in men of all races. When an Englishman or an Indian think of an object the image is to both the same whether evoked by the object itself or by the utterance of its name. For this reason a thought-reader whose cerebral centre is *en rapport* with that of another may read the hidden "speech" that is the thought of one whose spoken speech he cannot understand. Thus whilst the thought-movement is similar in all men the expression of it as Vaikhari Shabda differs. According to tradition there was once a universal language. According to the Biblical account this was so before the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel. Similarly there is, it is said, in the Rigveda a mysterious passage which speaks of the "Three Fathers and three Mothers" by whose action like that of the Elohim, "all comprehending speech" was made into that which was not so. Nor is this surprising when we consider that difference in gross speech is due to the evolution of thought evolved in the course of time. If the

same for all men then there would be but one language. But now this is not so. Racial characteristics and physical conditions such as the nature of the vocal organs, climate, inherited impressions and so forth differ. Therefore so also does language. But for each particular man speaking any particular language the uttered name of any object is the gross expression of his inner thought-movement. It evokes that movement and again expresses it. It evokes the idea and the idea is consciousness as mental operation. That operation can be so intensified as to be itself creative. This is Mantra-Chaitanya.

It is said in the Tantra Shāstras that the fifty letters of the alphabet are in the six bodily Chakras called Mūlādhāra, Svādishthāna, Manipūra, Anāhata, Vishuddha, and Ājñā. These 50 letters multiplied by 20 are in the thousand-petalled Lotus or Sahasrāra.

From the above account it will be understood that when it is said that the "Letters" are in the six bodily Chakras it is not to be supposed that it is intended to absurdly affirm that the letters as written shapes, or as the uttered sounds which are heard by the ear are there. The letters in this sense, that is as gross things, are manifested only in speech and writing. This much is clear. But the precise significance of this statement is a matter of some difficulty. There is in fact no subject which presents more difficulties than Mantravidyā whether considered generally or in relation to the particular matter in hand.

What proceeds from the body is in it in subtle or causal form. Why, however, it may be asked are particular letters assigned to particular Chakras. I have heard several explanations given which do not in my opinion bear the test of examination.

If the arrangement be not artificial for the purpose of Sādhana the simplest explanation is that which follows:—From the Brahman are produced the five Bhūtas Ether, Air, Fire, Water, Earth, in the order stated; and from them issued the six Chakras from Ājñā to Mūlādhāra. The letters are (with the exception next stated) placed in the Chakras in their alphabetical order; that is the vowels as being the first letters or Shaktis of the consonants (which cannot be pronounced without them) are placed in the Vishuddha Chakra: the first consonant Ka in Anāhata and so forth until the Mūlādhāra wherein are set the last four letters from Va to Sa. Thus in Ājñā there are Ha and Ksha as being Brahmabijas. In the next or Vishuddha Chakra are the 16 vowels which originated first. Therefore they are placed in Vishuddha the etheral ether also having originated first.

The same principle applies to the other letters in the other Chakras namely Ka to Tha ( 12 letters and petals ) in Anâhata ; Da to Pha ( 10 ) in Manipûra ; Ba to La ( 6 ) in Svâdishthâna ; and Va to Sa ( 4 ) in Mûlâdhâra. The connection between particular letters and the Chakras in which they are placed are further said to be due to the fact that in uttering any particular letter the Chakra in which it is placed and its surroundings are brought into play. The sounds of the sanskrit alphabet are classified according to the organs used in their articulation and are guttural (Kantha) palatals (Tâlu) cerebrals (Mûrddhâ) dentals (Danta) and labials (Ostha). When so articulated each letter it is said "touches" the Chakra in which it is and in which on this account it has been placed. In uttering them certain Chakras are affected ; that is brought into play. This it is alleged will be found to be so if the letter is carefully pronounced and attention is paid to the accompanying bodily movement. Thus in uttering Ha the head ( Âjnâ ) is touched and in uttering the deep-deated Va the basal Chakra or Mûlâdhâra. In making the first sound the forehead is felt to be affected, and in making the last the lower part of the body around the root-lotus. This is the theory put forth as accounting for the position of the letters in the Chakras.

A Mantra is, like everything else, Shakti. But the mere utterance of a Mantra without more is a mere movement of the lips. The mantra must be awakened (prabuddha) just like any other Shakti if effect is to be had therefrom. This is the union of sound and idea through a knowledge of the Mantra and its meaning. The recitation of a Mantra without knowing its meaning is practically fruitless. I say "practically" because devotion, even though it be ignorant, is never wholly void of fruit. But a knowledge of the meaning is not enough ; for it is possible by reading a book or receiving oral instructions to get to know the meaning of a Mantra, without anything further following. Each Mantra is the embodiment of a particular form of Consciousness or Shakti. This is the Mantra-Shakti. Consciousness or Shakti also exists in the form of the Sâdhaka. The object then is to unite these two, when thought is not only in the outer husk but is vitalised by will knowledge and action through its conscious centre in union with that of the Mantra. The latter is Devatâ or a particular manifestation of Shakti ; and the Sâdhaka who identifies himself therewith, identifies himself with that Shakti. According to Yoga when the mind is concentrated on any object it is unified with it. When man is so identified with a Varma or Tattva, then the power of objects to bind ceases, and he



becomes the controller. Thus in Kundalini Yoga the static bodily Shakti merges the Chakras to meet Shiva-Shakti in the Sahasrâra. As the Sâdhaka is, through the power of the rising Shakti, identified with each of the centres, Tattvas and Mâtrikâ Shaktis they cease to bind until passing through all he attains Samâdhi. As the Varnas are Shiva-Shakti, concentration on them draws the mind towards, and then unifies it with, the Devatâ which is one with the Mantra. The Devatâ of the Mantra is only the creative Shakti assuming that particular form. As already stated, Devatâ may be realised in any object, not merely in Mantras, Yantras, Ghatas, Pratimas or other ritual objects of worship. The same power which manifests to the ear in the Mantra is represented in the lines and curves of the Yantra which the Kaulavaliya Tantra says is the body of the Devatâ :—

*"Yantram mantramayang proktang mantrâtma devataiva hi  
Dehâtmanor yathâ bhedo yantra devatayostathâ."*

The Yantra is thus the graphic symbol of the Shakti indicated by the Mantra with which identification takes place. The Pratima or image is a grosser visual form of the Devatâ. But the Mantras are particular forms of Divine Shakti, the realisation of which is efficacious to produce particular results. As in Kundali-Yoga, so also here the identification of the Sâdhaka with different Mantras gives rise to various Vibhûtis or powers : for each grouping of the letters represents a new combination of the Mâtrikâ Shaktis. It is the eternal Shakti who is the life of the Mantra. Therefore Siddhi in Mantra Sâdhanâ is the union of the Sâdhaka's Shakti with the Mantra Shakti; the identification of the Sâdhaka with the Mantra is the identification of the knower ( Vedaka ) knowing ( Vidyâ ) and known ( Vedya ) or the Sâdhaka, Mantra and Devatâ. Then the Mantra works. The mind must feed and is always feeding on something. It seizes the Mantra and works its way to its heart. When there, it is the Chitta or mind of the Sâdhaka unified with the Shakti of the Mantra which works. Then subject and object, in its Mantra form, meet as one. By meditation the Sâdhaka gains unity with the Devatâ behind, as it were, the Mantra and Whose form the Mantra is. The union of the Sâdhaka of the Mantra and the Devatâ of the Mantra is the result of the effort to realise permanently the incipient desire for such union. The will towards Divinity is a dynamic which pierces everything and finds there Divinity itself. It is because Westerns and some Westernised Hindus do not understand the principles of Mantra : principles which lie at the centre of Indian religious theory and practice that they see nothing in

it where they do not regard it as gross superstition. It must be admitted that Mantra Sādhana is often done ignorantly. Faith is placed in externals and the inner meaning is often lost. But even such ignorant worship is better than none at all. "It is better to bow to Nārāyaṇa with one's shoes on than never to bow at all." Much also is said of "vain repetitions". What Christ condemned was not repetition but "vain" repetition. That man is a poor psychologist who does not know the effect of repetition when done with faith and devotion. It is a fact that the inner kingdom yields to violence and can be taken by assault. Indeed it yields to nothing but the strong will of the Sādhaka for it is that will in its purest and fullest strength. By practice with the Mantra the Devatā is invoked. This means that the mind itself is Devatā when unified with Devatā. This is attained through repetition of the Mantra (Japa).

Japa is compared to the action of a man shaking a sleeper to wake him up. The Sādhaka's own consciousness is awakened. The two lips are Shiva and Shakti. The movement in utterance is the "coition" (Maithuna) of the two. Shabda which issues therefrom is in the nature of Bindu. The Devatā then appearing is, as it were, the son of the Sādhaka. It is not the supreme Devatā who appears (for It is actionless) but in all cases an emanation produced by the Sādhakas worship for his benefit only. In the case of worshippers of the Shiva-Mantra a Boy Shiva (Bāla Shiva) appears who is then made strong by the nurture which the Sādhaka gives to him. The occultist will understand all such symbolism to mean that the Devatā is a form of the Consciousness which becomes the Boy-Shiva and which when strengthened is the full grown Divine Power Itself. All Mantras are forms of consciousness (Vijñānatūpa) and when the Mantra is fully practised it enlivens the Sangskāra and the Artha appears to the mind. Mantras used in worship are thus a form of the Sangskāras of Jivas; the Artha of which manifests to the consciousness which is pure. The essence of all this is concentrate and vitalise thought and will power, that is Shakti.

The Mantra method is Shāktopāya Yoga working with concepts and form whilst Shāmbhavopāya Yoga has been well said to be a more direct attempt at intuition of Shakti apart from all passing concepts, which as they cannot show the Reality only serve to hide it the more from one's view and thus maintain bondage. These Yoga methods are but examples of the universal principle of Sādhana, that the Sādhaka

should first work with and through form and then, so far as may be, by a meditation which dispenses with it.

It has been pointed out to me by Professor Surendra Nath Das Gupta that this Varna-Sâdhanâ so important a content of the Tantra Shâstra is not altogether its, creation, but, as I have often in other matters observed, a development of ancient Vaidik teaching. For it was, he says, first attempted in the Âranyaka Epoch upon the Pratikopâsanâ of which the Tantrik Sâdhanâ is, he suggests, based; though, of course, that Shâstra has elaborated the notion into a highly complicated system which is so peculiar a feature of its religious discipline. There is thus a synthesis of this Pratikopâsanâ with Yoga method, resting as all else upon a Vedantic basis.

## VARNAMĀI A

(THE GARLAND OF LETTERS)

The world has never altogether been without the Wisdom nor its Teachers. The degree and manner in which it has been imparted have, however, necessarily varied according to the capacities of men to receive it. So also have the symbols by which it has been conveyed. These symbols further have varying significance according to the spiritual advancement of the worshipper. This question of degree and variety of presentation have led to the superficial view that the difference in beliefs negatives the existence of any commonly established Truth. But if the matter be regarded more deeply, it will be seen that whilst there is one essential Wisdom its revelation has been more or less complete according to symbols evolved by, and, therefore, fitting to, particular racial temperaments and characters. Symbols are naturally misunderstood by those to whom the beliefs they typify are unfamiliar, and who differ in temperament from those who have evolved them. To the ordinary Western mind the symbols of Hinduism are often repulsive and absurd. It must not, however, be forgotten that some of the symbols of Western Faiths have the same effect on the Hindu. From the picture of the "Slain Lamb," and other symbols in terms of blood and death, he naturally shrinks in disgust. The same effect on the other hand is not seldom produced in the Western at the sight of the terrible forms in which India has embodied Her vision of the undoubted Terrors which exist in and around us. All is not smiling in this world. Even amongst persons of the same race and indeed of the same faith we may observe such differences. Before the Catholic Cultus of the "Sacred Heart" had overcome the opposition which it at first encountered, and for a considerable time after, its imagery was regarded with aversion by some who spoke of it in terms which would be to-day counted as shocking irreverence. These differences are likely to exist so long as men vary in mental attitude and temperament, and until they reach the stage in which, having discovered the essential truths, they become indifferent to the mode in which they are presented. We must also in such matters distinguish between what a symbol may have meant and what it now means. Until quite recent times the English peasant folk and others danced around the flower-wreathed Maypole. That the pole originally (like other similar forms) represented

of no little doubt as that these folk, who in

recent ages danced around it, were ignorant of that fact. The Bishop's mitre is said to be the head of a fish worn by ancient near-eastern hierophants. But what of that? It has no such associations now.

Let us illustrate these general remarks by a short study of one portion of the Kālī symbolism which affects so many, who are not Hindus, with disgust or horror. Kālī is the Deity in that aspect in which It withdraws all things which It had created into Itself. Kālī is so called because She devours Kāla (Time) and then resumes Her own dark formlessness. The scene is laid in the cremation ground (Shmashāna), amidst white sun-dried bones and fragments of flesh, gnawed and pecked at by carrion beasts and birds. Here the "heroic" (Vīra) worshipper (Sādhaka) performs at dead of night his awe-inspiring rituals. Kālī is set in such a scene for She is that aspect of the great Power which withdraws all things into Herself at, and by, the dissolution of the universe. He alone worships without fear, who has abandoned all worldly desires, and seeks union with Her as the One Blissful and Perfect Experience. On the burning ground all worldly desires are burnt away. She is naked and dark like a threatening rain-cloud. She is dark, for She who is Herself beyond mind and speech, reduces all things into that worldly "nothingness," which as the Void (Shūnya) of all which we now know, is at the same time the All (Pūrṇa) which is Peace. She is naked, being clothed in space alone (Digambara); because the Great Power is unlimited; further She is in Herself beyond Māyā (Māyātītā); that Power of Hers which creates all universes. She stands upon the white corpse-like (Shavarūpa) body of Shiva. He is white, because he is the illuminating transcendental aspect of consciousness. He is inert, because he is the changeless aspect of the Supreme and She the apparently changing aspect of the same. In truth She and He are one and the same, being twin aspects of the One who is changelessness in, and exists as, change. Much might be said in explanation of these and other symbols such as Her loosened hair, the lolling tongue, the thin stream of blood which trickles from the corners of the mouth, the position of Her feet, the apron of dead men's hands around Her waist, Her implements and so forth. Here I take only the garland of freshly-served heads which hangs low from Her neck.

Some have conjectured that Kālī was originally the Goddess of the dark skinned inhabitants of the Vindhya Hills taken over by the Brāhmanas into their worship. One of them has thought that She was a defied Princess of these folk who fought against the white incoming Aryans. He pointed to the significant fact that the severed heads are

those of white men. The Western may say that Kālī was an objectification of the Indian mind, making a Divinity of the Power of Death. An Eastern may reply that She is the Sangketa (symbol) which is the effect of the impress of a Spiritual Power on the Indian mind. I do not pause to consider these matters here.

The question before us is, what does this imagery mean now, and what has it meant for centuries past to the initiate in Her symbolism? An exoteric explanation describes this Garland as made up of the heads of Demons, which She as a power of righteousness, has conquered. According to an inner explanation given in the Indian Tantra Shāstra this string of heads is the Garland of Letters (Varnamāla), that is the fifty, and as some count it, fifty-one letters, of the Sanskrit Alphabet. The same interpretation is given in the Buddhist Demchog Tantra in respect of the garland worn by the great Heruka. These letters represent the universe of names and forms (Nāmarūpa) that is Speech (Shabda) and its meaning or object (Artha). She the Devourer of all "slaughters," that is withdraws, both into Her undivided Consciousness at the Great dissolution of the Universe which they are. She wears the Letters which, She as the Creatrix bore. She wears the Letters which, She as the Dissolving Power takes to Herself again. A very profound doctrine is connected with these Letters, which space prevents me from fully entering into here. I have set it out in greater detail in a forthcoming work of mine on the "Serpent Power" (Kundalini) which projects Consciousness, in Its true nature blissful and beyond all dualisms, into the World of good and evil. The movements of Her projection are indicated by the Letters subtle and gross which exist on the Petals of the inner bodily centres or Lotuses.

Very shortly stated, Shabda which literally means Sound—here lettered sound—is in its causal state (Parashabda) known as "Supreme Speech" (Paravāk). This is the Shabdabrahman or Logos; that aspect of Reality or Consciousness (Chit) in which it is the immediate cause of creation: that is of the dichotomy in Consciousness which is "I" and "This," subject and object, mind and matter. This condition of causal Shabda is the Cosmic Dreamless State (Sushupti). This Logos awakening from its causal sleep "sees," that is, creatively ideates the universe, and is then known as Pashyanti shabda. As Consciousness "sees" or ideates, forms arise in the Creative Mind, which are themselves impressions (Samskāra) carried over from previous worlds, which ceased to exist as such when the Universe entered the state of causal dreamless

sleep on the previous dissolution. These re-awake as the formless Consciousness awakes to enjoy once again sensual life in the world of forms.

The Cosmic Mind is at first itself both cognising subject (Grāhaka) and cognised object (Grāhya); for it has not yet projected its thought into the plane of Matter: the mind as subject cogniser is Shabda and the mind as the object cognised, that is the mind in the form of object is subtle Artha. This Shabda called Madhyama Shabda is an "Inner Naming" "or" Hidden Speech." At this stage that which answers to the spoken letters (Varna) are the "Little Mothers" or Mātrika, the subtle forms of gross speech. There is at this stage a differentiation of Consciousness into subject and object but the letter is now within and forms part of the Self. This is the state of Cosmic Dreaming (Svapna). This "Hidden Speech" is understandable of all men if they can get in mental *rapport* one with the other. So a thought-reader can read the thoughts of a man whose spoken speech he cannot understand. The Cosmic Mind then projects these mental images on to the material plane and they there become materialised as gross physical objects (Sthūla artha) which make impressions from without on the mind of the created consciousness. This is the cosmic waking state (Jāgrat). At this last stage the thought-movement expresses itself through the vocal organs in contact with the air as uttered speech (Vaikhari Shabda) made up of letters, syllables and sentences. The physical unlettered sound which manifests Shabda is called Dhvani. This lettered sound is manifested Shabda or Name (Nāma) and the physical objects denoted by speech are the gross Artha or form (Rūpa).

This manifested speech varies in men, for their individual and racial characteristics and the conditions, such as country and climate in which they live, differ. There is a tradition that there was once an universal speech before the building of the Tower of Babel, signifying the confusion of tongues. A friend has drawn my attention to a passage in the Rig Veda which he interprets in a similar sense. For it says that the Three Fathers and the Three Mothers, like the Elohim, made (in the interest of creation) all comprehending speech into that which was not so.

Of these letters and names and their meaning or objects that is concepts and concepts objectified the whole Universe is composed. When Kālī withdraws the world, that is the *as* and forms which the Letters signify, the dualism in consciousness, which is creation,

van.shas. There is neither 'I' (Aham, nor 'This' (Idam) but the one non-dual Perfect Experience which Kālī in Her own true nature (Svarūpa) is. In this way Her Garland is understood.

"Surely" I hear it said "not by all. Does every Hindu worshipper think such profundities when he sees the figure of Mother Kālī?" Of course not, no more than, (say) an ordinary Italian peasant knows of, or can understand, the subtleties of either the Catholic mystics or doctors of theology. When, however, the Western undertakes to depict and explain Indian symbolism, he should, in the interest both of knowledge and fairness, understand what it means both to the high as well as to the humble worshipper.



## SHĀKTA SĀDHANĀ.

As I have frequently explained there are various schools of Tantra or Āgama according to the several divisions of the worshippers of the five Devatās (Panchojāsana). Of the five classes the most important are Vaishnava, Shaiva and Shākta. I never however hesitate to repeat a statement of a fact of which those who speak of "The Tantra" ignore.

The main elements of Sādhana are common to all such communities; such as Pūjā (inner and outer) Pratimā or other emblems (Linga, Shālagrama) Upachāra, Mandala, Yantra, Mantra, Japa, Nyāsa, Bhūtaśuddhi, Mudrā, Dhyāna, Sangskāra and so forth. Even the Vāmāchāra ritual, which some wrongly think to be peculiar to the Shaktas, is or was followed by members of other Sampradāyas including Jainas and Bauddhas. Both in so far as they follow this ritual are reckoned amongst Kaulas though, as being non-vaidik, of a lower class.

Notwithstanding this general community of ritual forms there are some variances which are due to two causes; firstly to difference in the Devatā worshipped, and secondly to difference of philosophical basis according as it is Advaita, Vishishtadvaita, or Dvaita. The presentment of fundamental ideas is sometimes in different terms. Thus the Vaishnava Pancharātra Āgama describes the creative process in terms of the Vyūhas, and the Shaiva-Shākta Āgamas explain it as the Ābhāsa of the thirty-six Tattvas. I here deal with only one form namely Shākta Sādhana in which the Ishtadevatā is Shakti in Her many forms.

The Ādyashakti is in the words of the Trishatī, concisely described as Ekānandachidākritih. Eka = Mukhya, Ānanda = Sukham, Chit = Chaitanyam or Prakāsha = Jñānam; and Ākritih = Svartpa. She is thus Sachchhidānanda-brahmarūpā. Therefore the worship of Her is direct worship of the Highest. Shākta doctrine is Advaitavāda. Therefore for all Advaitins its Sādhana is the highest. The Shākta Tantra is thus the Sādhana Shāstra of Advaitavāda. This will explain why it is dear to, and so highly considered by, all Advaitins. It is claimed to be the one and only stepping stone which leads directly to Kaivalya or Nirvānamukti; other forms of worship procuring for their followers (from the Saura to the Shaiva) various ascending forms of Gaunamukti. Others of course may claim this priority. Every sect considers itself to be the best and is in fact the best for those who with intelligence adopt it. Were it not so its adherents would naturally not belong to it but would choose some other. No true Shākta however will quarrel with

others over this. He will be content with his faith of which the Nigama kalpataru says that as among castes the Brāhmanas are foremost, so amongst Sādhakas are the Shāktas. For as Niruttara Tantra says, there is no Nirvāna without knowledge of Shakti (*Shaktijnānam vinā devī nirvānam naiva jāyate*). Amongst the Shāktas the foremost are said to be the worshippers of the Kālī Mantra. The Ādimahavidyā is Kālīkā. Other forms are Murttibheda of Brahmarāpinī Kālīkā. Kālīkula is followed by Jnānīs of Divya and Virā Bhāvas; and Shrikula by Karmin Sādhakas. According to Niruttara, Kālīkula include Kālī, Tārā, Raktakālī, Bhuvanā, Mardini, Tripurā, Tvaritā, Pratyangivā-vidyā, Durgā; and Shri Kula includes Sundarī, Bhairavī, Bālā, Bagalā, Kamalā, Dhumāvati, Mātangi, Svapnavatīvidyā, Madhumatī Mahavidyā. Of these forms Kālīkā is the highest or Ādyamūrti as being Shuddhasattvagunapradhānā, Nirvikārā, Nirgunabrahmasvarupa-prakashikā and, as the Kāmadhenu Tantra says, directly Kaivalyadāyini. Tārā is Sattvagunātmikā, Tattvavidyādāyini for by Tattvajnāna one attains Kaivalya. Shodasī, Bhubaneshvārī, Chhinnamastā are Rajah-pradhānā Sattvagunātmikā the givers of Gaunamukti and Svarga. Dhumāvati, Kamalā, Bagalā, Mātangi are Tamahpradhānā whose action is invoked in the magical Shatkarma.

The most essential point to remember as giving the key to all which follows is that Shāktadharmā is Vedantic Monism (Advaitavāda). Gandharva Tantra says. "Having as enjoined saluted the Guru and thought "So'ham" the wise Sādhaka the performer of the rite should meditate upon the unity of Jīva and Brahman."

*Gurūnnatvā vidhānena so'ham iti purodhasah  
Aikyang sambhārayet dhīmān jīvasya brahmano'pi cha*

Kālī Tantra says: "Having thus meditated the Sādhaka should worship Devī with the notion So'ham"

*Evang dhyātva tato devīng sohamātmānam archayet.*

Kubjika Tantra says "A Sādhaka should meditate upon himself as one and the same with Her" (*Tayā sahita-mātmānam ekibhātag vichintayet*). The same teaching is to be found throughout the Shāstra: Nāla Tantra directing the Sādhaka to think of himself as one with Tārā; Gandharva Tantra telling him to meditate on the self as one with Tripurā not different from Paramātmā; and Kālīkulasarvasva as one with Kālīkā and so forth. For as the Kulārṇava Tantra says "The body is the temple of God. Jīva is Sadāshiva. Let him give

up his ignorance as the offering which is thrown away (Nirmālya) and worship with the thought and feeling 'I am He.' "

*Deho devālayah proktaḥ, jīvo devaḥ sadāśhivaḥ*

*Tyajed ajñānanirmālyam, sahag bhāvena pūjayet.*

This Advaitavāda is naturally expressed in the ritual. The Samhitā and Brāhmanas of the four Vedas are (as contrasted with the Upanishads) Traigunyahavishaya. There is therefore much in the Vaidik Karmakānda which is contrary to Brahmajñāna. The same remarks apply to the ordinary Pashu ritual of the day. There are differences of touchable and untouchable, food, caste, and sex. How can a man directly qualify for Brahmajñāna who even in worship is always harping on distinctions of caste and sex and the like? He who distinguishes does not know. Of such distinctions the higher Tantrik worship of the Shākta type knows nothing. As the Yōginī Tantra says, the Shāstra is for all castes and for women as well as men. Tantra Shāstra is Upāsana Kānda and in this Shākta Upāsana the Karma and Jñāna Kāndas are mingled (Mishra). That is Karma is the ritual expression of the teaching of Jñāna Kānda and is calculated to lead to it. There is nothing in it which contradicts Brahmajñāna. This fact therefore renders it more conducive to the attainment of such spiritual experience. Such higher ritual serves to reveal Jñāna in the mind of the Pashu. So it is rightly said that a Kulajñāni even if he be a Chandāla is better than a Brāhmana. It is on these old Tantrik principles that the Indian religion of to-day can alone, if at all, maintain itself. They have no concern however with social life and what is called "social reform". For all secular purposes the Tantras recognise caste but in spiritual matters spiritual qualifications alone prevail. There are many such sound and high principles in the Tantra Shāstra for which it would receive credit, if it could only obtain a fair and unprejudiced consideration. But there are none so blind as those who will not see. And so we find that the "pure and high" ritual of the Veda is set in contrast in contrast with the supposed "low and impure" notions of the Tantras. On the contrary a Tantrik Pandit once said to me "The Vaidik Karmakānda is as useful for the ordinary man as is a washerman for dirty clothes. It helps to remove their impurities. But the Tantra Shāstra is like a glorious tree which gives jewelled fruit".

Sādhana is defined as that which leads to Siddhi. Sādhana comes from the root "Sādh" to exert to strive For what? That depends on the Sādhana and its object. Sādhana is any means to any end

and not necessarily religious worship, ritual and discipline. He who does Hathayoga, for physical health and strength, who accomplishes a magical Prayoga, who practises to gain an eightfold memory and so forth are each doing Sâdhanâ to gain a particular result (Siddhi), namely health and strength, a definite magical result, increased power of recollection and so forth. A Siddhi again is any power gained as the result of practice. Thus the Siddhi of Vetâla Agni Sâdhanâ is control over the fire-element. But the Sâdhanâ which is of most account and that of which I here speak, is religious worship and discipline to attain true spiritual experience. What is thus sought and gained may be either Heaven (Svarga) secondary liberation (Gaunamukti) or full Nirvâna. It is the latter which in the truest and highest sense is Siddhi, and striving for that end is the chief and highest form of Sâdhanâ. The latter term includes not merely ritual worship in the sense of adoration or prayer but every form of spiritual discipline such as sacraments (Sangskâra), austerities (Tapas), the reading of Scripture (Svadhyaya), meditation (Dhyâna) and so forth. Yoga is a still higher form of Sâdhanâ; for the term Yoga means strictly not the result but the means whereby Siddhi in the form of Samâdhi may be had. Ordinarily however Sâdhanâ is used to express all spiritual disciplines based on the notion of worshipper and worshipped; referring thus to Upâsanâ not Yoga. The latter passes beyond these and all other dualisms to Monistic experience (Samâdhi). The first leads up to the second by purifying the mind (Chittashuddhi) character and disposition (Bhâva) so as to render it capable of Jnâna or Laya Yogas; or becomes itself Parabhakti which as the Devibhâgavata says is not different from Jnâna.

The great Siddhi is thus Moksha; and Moksha is Paramâtmâ that is the Svarûpa of Âtma. But the Sâdhaka is Jivâtma that is Âtma associated with Avidyâ of which Moksha or Paramâtmâ is free. Avidyâ manifests as mind and body, the subtle and gross vehicles of spirit. Man is thus therefore Spirit (Âtmâsvarûpa) which is Sachchhidânanda; Mind (Antahkarana) and body (Sthûla sharira). The two latter are forms of Shakti that is projections of the Creative Consciousness through and as its Mâyâ. The essential operation of Mâyâ and of the Kanchukas is to seemingly contract consciousness. As the Yoginîthridaya Tantra says, the going forth (Prasara) of Consciousness (Samvit) is in fact a contraction (Samkocha) as Mâtri, Mâna, Meva. Consciousness is thus finitised into a limited self which and other selves regard one another as mutually exclusive. The One Self becomes its own object as

the many forms of the universe. It conceives itself as separate from them. Oblivious in its separateness of its true nature it regards all other persons and things as different from itself. It acts for the benefit of its limited self. It is in fact selfish in the primary sense of the term ; and this selfishness is the root of all its desires and of all its sins. The more mere worldly desires are fostered, the greater is the bondage of man to the mental and material planes. Excessively selfish desires display themselves as the sins of lust, greed, anger, envy and so forth. These bind more firmly than regulated desires and moreover lead to Hell (Naraka). The most general and ultimate object of Sādhana is therefore to cast off from the Self this veil of Avidyā and to attain that Perfect experience which is Atmāsvārūpa or Moksha. But to know Brahman is to *be* Brahman. *Brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati* as Shruti says. In truth and essence man is Brahman. But owing to Avidyā it is necessary to do something in order that this ever existent fact may be realised. That action (Kriyā) is the work of Sādhana in its endeavour to clear away the veiling Avidyā which is the source of pain and sin. In the sense that Avidyā is being removed man may be said by Sādhana to become Brahman : that is he realises himself as what he truly is and was. Sādhana therefore by the grace of Devī or "descent of Shakti" (Shaktipāta) "converts" (to use an English term) the Sādhaka, that is turns him away from separatist worldly enjoyment to seek his own true self as the pure spiritual experience. This transformation is the work and aim of Sādhana. But this experience is not to be had in its completest sense at once and at a bound. It is as Patanjali says very rare. Indeed those who truly desire it are very few. Brahman is mindless (Amanah) ; for mind is a fetter on true consciousness. This mindlessness (Niralambapuri) is sought through the means of Yoga. But no would-be Yogi can attain this state unless his mind is already pure ; that is not only free from gross sin, but already possessing some freedom from the bondage of worldly desires, cultivated and trained, and desirous of liberation (Mumukshu). The aim therefore of preliminary Sādhana is to secure that purification of mind (Chittashuddhi) which is alone the basis on which Yoga works. The first object then is to restrain the natural appetites, to control the senses, and all that excessive selfishness beyond the bounds of Dharma which is sin (Pāpa). Dharma prescribes these bounds because unrestricted selfish enjoyment leads man downward from the path of his true evolution. Man is, as regards part of his nature, an animal and has according to the Shāstra passed through all animal forms in his 84 lakhs of previous births.

But he has also a higher nature and if he conforms to the path laid out for him will progress by degrees to the state of that Spirit Whose limited form he now is. If he strays from that path he falls back, and continued descent may bring him again to the state of apparently unconscious matter through many intervening Hells in this and other worlds. For this reason the Shâstra repeats that he is a "selfkiller" who having with difficulty attained to manhood neglects the opportunities of further progress which they give him. Therefore he must avoid sin which leads to a fall. How can the impure realise the Pure? How can the seeker of sensual enjoyment only desire formless liberating Bliss? How can he recognise his unity with all if he is bound in selfishness which is the root of all sin? How can he realise the Brahman who thinks himself to be the separate enjoyer of worldly objects and is bound by all sensualities? In various forms this is the teaching of all religions. It would be hardly necessary to elaborate what is so plain were it not apparently supposed that the Tantra Shâstra is a strange exception to these universally recognised principles. "I thought" said a recent English correspondent of mine "that the Tantra was a wholly bad lot belonging to the left hand path." This is not so : common through the notion be. The Shâstra teaches that the Sâdhaka must slay his "six enemies" which are the six cardinal sins and all others allied with them. Whether all the *means* enjoyed are good, expedient, and fitting for the purpose is a different matter. This is a distinction which none of its critics ever make; but which accuracy and justice require they should make if they condemn the method. It is one thing to say that a particular method prescribed for a good end is bad, dangerous, or having regard to the present position of the generality of men, unadvisable; and a totally different thing to say that the *end* which is sought is itself bad. The Tantra like all Shâstra seeks the Paramârtha and nothing else. Whether all the forms of search are good (and against the bulk of them no moral objection can be raised) is another question. Let it be for argument supposed that one or other of the means prescribed was not good : is it accurate or just to condemn not only the particular Shâstra in which (as the discipline of a particular class of Sâdhakas only) they occur but also the whole of the Âgamas of all classes of worshippers under the misleading designation "The Tantra"?

I am here speaking from the point of view of one who is not a believer in the scriptural authority (in the orthodox sense) of the Indian Shâstra. Those however who are Hindus must logically either deny

that they are the word of Shiva or accept all which that word says. For if a Tantra prescribes what is wrong this vitiates the authority in all matters of the Tantra in which wrong is ordained. It may be that other matters dealt with should be accepted but this is so not of because any authority in the particular Tantra but because they have the countenance elsewhere of a true authoritative scripture. From this logical position no escape is possible.

Let us for the moment turn to the celebrated Hymn to Kālī (of, as those who read it might call, the extremist Shākta worship) entitled the Karpurādi Stotra which like most (probably all) of its kind has both a material (Sthūla) and subtle (Sūkshma) meaning. In the 19th verse it is said that the Devi delights to receive in sacrifice the flesh, with bones and hair, of goat, buffalo, cat, sheep, camel and of man. In its literal sense this passage may be taken as an instance of the man-sacrifice of which we find traces throughout the world (and in some of the Tantras) in past stages of man's evolution. Nothing is more common in all religions (and Christianity as by some understood provides many examples) than to materially understand spiritual truths. For such is the understanding of material or Sthūladarshin (grossly seeing) men. But even in the past the spiritual referred such sacrifice to the self; an inner sacrifice which all must make who would attain to that Spirit which we may call Kālī, God, Allah, or what you will. But what is the Svartipa vyākhyā or true meaning of this apparently revolting verse. The meaning is that inner or mental worship (Antaryāga) is done to Her who is black (Asitā) because She is the boundless (Sītā = Baddhā) Consciousness (Chidrāpā) whose true nature is eternal liberation (Nityamukta Svabhāva). And just as in outer worship material offerings (Upachāra) are made, so the Sādhaka sacrifices to Her his lust (the Goat-Kāma) his anger (the Buffalo-Krodha) his greed (the Cat-Lobha) his stupidity of illusion (the Sheep-Moha) his envy (the Camel-Mātsaryya) and his pride and infatuation with worldly things (the Man-Mada). All will readily recognise in these animals and man the qualities (Guna) here attributed to them. It is to such as so sacrifice to whom is given Siddhi in the form of the five kinds of Mukti.

Competency for Tantra (Tantrashāstrādhikāra) is described in the second chapter of the Gandharva Tantra as follows:—The aspirant must be intelligent (Dakṣha) with senses controlled (Jitendriya) abstaining from injury to all beings (Sarvabhingṣā vinirmukta) ever doing good to all (Sarvaprāṇi hitarataḥ) pure (Sucha) a believer in Veda

(Astika) a non-dualist (Dvaitahina) whose faith and refuge is in Brahman (Brahmanishta, Brahmanavâdi, Brâhmi, Brahmaparayana) "Such an one" it adds "is competent for this Scripture *otherwise he is no Sâdhaka*" (*So'smin shâstre'dhikâri tadanyatra na sâdhaka*). It will be allowed by all that these are strange qualifications for a follower of "a bad scripture of the left hand path" Those who are on such a path are not supposed to be seekers of the Brahman nor solicitous for the good of all being. Rather the reverse. The Kulârnavâ Tantra (which I may observe deals with the ill-famed Panchtattva ritual) gives in the Thirteenth Chapter a long list of qualifications necessary in the case of a Tantrik disciple (Shishya). Amongst these, it rejects the slave of food and sexual pleasure (Jihvopasthapara); the lustful (Kâmuka) shameless (Nirlajya) the greedy and voracious eater, the sinner in general who does not follow Dharma and Âchâra, who is ignorant, who has no desire for spiritual knowledge, who is a hypocrite with Brahman on his lips but not in his heart and who is without devotion (Bhakti). Such qualifications are inconsistent with its alleged intention to encourage sensuality unless we assume that all such talk in all the Shâstras is mere hypocrisy.

It is not however sufficient for the Sâdhaka to turn from sin and the occasions of it. It is necessary to present the mind with a pure object and to busy it in pure actions. This not only excludes other objects and actions but trains the mind in such a way towards goodness and illumination that it at length no longer desires wrongful enjoyment; or lawful Pashu enjoyment, or even enjoyment infused with a spiritual Bhâva, and thus finally attains desirelessness (Nishkâma-bhâva). The Mind dominated by matter, then regulated in matter, consciously releases itself to first work through matter, then against matter; then rising above matter it at length, enters the Supreme State in which all the antithesis of Matter and Spirit have gone.

What then are the means by which spiritual Siddhi is attained. Some are possibly common to all religions; some are certainly common to more than one religion, such as objective ritual worship (Bâhyapûjâ) inner or mental worship (Mânasa Pûjâ or Antarpûjâ) of the Ishta-devatâ, prayer (Prârthana), sacraments (Sangskâra) self discipline for the control of the will and natural appetites (Tapas) meditation (Dhyâna) and so forth. There is for instance as I have elsewhere pointed out a remarkable similarity between the Tantrik ritual of the Agamas and Christian ritual in its Catholic form. It has been suggested that Catholicism is really a legacy of the ancient civilisation; an adapta-



tion of the old religions (allied in many respects with Shākta worship) of the Mediterranean races, deriving much of its strength from its non-Christian elements. I will not observe on this except to say that you do not dispose of the merits of any ritual by showing (if it be the fact) that it is extremely old and non-Christian. Christianity is one of the great religions but even its adherents, unless ignorant, will not claim for it the monopoly of all that is good.

I cannot deal in detail with Tantrik Sādhana for this would take more than a volume. I will merely shortly indicate some of the general psychological principles on which it is based and which, if understood, will give the key to an understanding of the extraordinary complexity and variety of the actual ritual details. I will also illustrate the application of these principles in some of the more common forms of worship.

It is recognised in the first place that mind and body mutually react upon one another. There must therefore be a physical Sādhana as the groundwork of the mental Sādhana to follow. India has for ages recognised what is now becoming generally admitted namely, that not only health but clarity of mind, character, disposition, and morals, are affected by the nourishment, exercise, and general treatment of the body. Thus from the moral aspects one of the arguments against the use of meat and strong drink is the encouragement they give to animal passions. Why then it may be asked do these form a part of some forms of Shākta Sādhana? I answer this later. It is however a Hindu trait to insist on purity of food and person. Tantrik Hathayoga deals in full with the question of bodily cleanliness, food, sexual continence, and physical exercise. But there are injunctions, though less strict, for the ordinary householder to whom wine and other intoxicating drinks and the eating of beef (thought by some to be a material foundation of the British Empire but now recognised by several medical authorities to be the source of physical ills) and some other foods, as also all gluttony, as regards permitted food, are forbidden. Periodical fasts are enjoined; as also during certain religious exercises the eating of the pure food called Havishyannam. The sexual life has also its regulations. It should be said to keep the mind sane and pure and a good and not rebellious instrument for mental Sādhana, let the body be well treated and kept pure. In the Tantras will be found insistence on several bodily perfections in the Sādhakā. Thus he should not be deformed, with defective limbs, wanting in or having excess of any limb weak of limb crippled, blind, deaf, dirty, with unnatural movements paralysed slothful in action (Kulārṇava XIII)

Let us now pass to the mind For the understanding of Hindu ritual it is necessary to understand both Hindu philosophy and Hindu psychology. This point so far as I am aware has never been observed. Certainly Indian ritual has never been dealt with on this basis. It has generally been considered sufficient to class it as "Mummery" and then to pass on to something supposed to be more worthy of consideration. It is necessary to remember that (outside successful Yoga) the mind (at any rate in its normal state) is never for one moment unoccupied. At every moment of time worldly objects are seeking to influence it. Only those actually do so to which the mind, in its faculty as Manas, gives attention. In one of the Tantrik Texts (Shatchakranirūpana) the Manas is aptly spoken of as a door-keeper who lets some enter and keeps others outside. For this reason it is called Sangkalpavikalpāt-maka: that is it selects (Sangkalpa) some things which the senses (Indriya) present to it and rejects (Vikalpa) others. If the Manas attends to the sensation demanding entrance it is admitted and passed on to the Buddhi and not otherwise. So the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says "My Manas was elsewhere and therefore I did not hear". This is a secret for the endurance of pain which not only the martyrs and the witches knew but some others who have suffered lesser pains. When the sensation is passed on to the Buddhi as also when the latter acts upon the material of remembered percepts there is formed in the Buddhi a Vritti. The latter is a modification of the Mind into the form of the perceived object. Unless a man is a Siddhayogi it is not possible to avoid the formation of mental Vrittis. The object therefore of Sādhana is firstly to take the attention away from undesirable objects and then to place a desirable object in their stead. For the mind must feed on something. This object is the īśtadevatā. When a Sādhaka fully, sincerely and deeply contemplates and worships his īśtadevatā his mind is formed into a Vritti in the form of the Devatā. As the latter is all purity the mind which contemplates it is during, and to the depth of, such contemplation pure. By prolonged and repeated worship the mind becomes naturally pure and of itself tends to reject all impure notions. What to others is a source of impurity is pure. To the pure as the Hellenes said all things are pure. Things are not impure. It is the impure mind which makes them so. He learns to see that everything and act are manifestations of the Divine. He who realises Consciousness in all objects no longer has desire ~~therefore~~ ~~for this way~~ a good Bhāva, as it is called, is attained which

as well as what is called specifically Mantrayoga, is based. It is profoundly said in the Kulārṇava Tantra that a man must rise by means of the same things which are the cause of his fall. If you fall on the ground you must raise yourself by it. The mind is thus controlled by means of its own object (Vishaya); that is the world of name and form (Nāmarūpa). The unregulated mind is distracted by Nāmarūpa. But the same Nāmarūpa may be used as the first means of escape therefrom. A particular form therefore of Nāmarūpa productive of pure Bhāva is therefore given as the object of meditation. This is called Sthūla or Saguna Dhyāna of the five Devatās. Material media are used as the first steps whereby the Formless One is through Yoga attained such as Images (Pratimā) emblems (Linga, Shālagrama) pictures (Chitra) mural markings (Bhittirekha) Jar (Ghata) Mandalas and Yantras. To these worship (Pūjā) is done with other rites such as Japa, Nyāsa and so forth and gestures (Mudrā). Siddhi in this is the Samādhi called Mahābhāva.

The second principle to be noted is that the object or minds content as also the service (Sheva) of it may be either gross (Sthūla) or subtle (Sūkshma). This distinction pervades all the rituals and rightly so. Men are not all at the same degree of intellectual and spiritual advancement. For the simple minded there are simple material and mental images. Progressively considered the objects used to fix in the mind the thought of the Devatā are images in human or semi-human form, similar pictures, non-human forms or emblems (such as Linga and Gauripat, Shālagrama, Ghata, Mandalas, and lastly Yantras. The image is not merely used for instruction (*ut pictura pro scriptura haberetur*) or to incite in the mind a mental picture, but after the Prānapratishtha rite is itself worshipped. So also amongst Christians, where however this rite is unknown, "eikones acheiropoiētoi" (what are called in Sanskrit Svayambhu emblems) and wonder working images have been directly venerated. Superficial persons doubtless think themselves profound when they ask how the Devatā can be invoked (Avahana). To them also the dismissal (Visarjana) savours of childish impudence and absurdity. How (I have read) can God be told to come and go? A Christian who sings the Hymn "Veni creator Spiritus" is indeed ignorant if he fancies that at his request the Holy Ghost comes to him through the skies. As Shankara says Spirit (Ātmā) never comes and never goes. That which in fact moves is the mind of the Sādhaka in which, if pure, Spirit manifests Itself. That Spirit is in all places and when the Sādhaka's mind fully realises its

presence in the Image the latter as the manifestation of that Spirit is a fitting object of worship. Some knowledge of Vedānta is needful for the understanding and performance of image-worship. Yantra worship is however higher and is fitter for those who have reached a more advanced stage in Sādhana. The term literally means an instrument; that by which anything is accomplished. In Upāsana it is that instrument by which the mind is fixed upon the Devatā of worship. It is, as drawn, a diagram consisting of lines, angles and curves, varying with the Devatā worshipped as also to some extent according as it is a Pūjā or Dhāraṇa Yantra, the whole being included in a common Bhupāra. A Yantra is three dimensional though it is very generally represented by a drawing on the flat. The Yantra and each part of it as representing certain Shaktis has a significance which is known to the instructed Sādhaka. On the great Shriyantra with its Baindava and other Chakras there is an entire literature. It is neglected nowadays. Those who have fully understood it are master in Tantra Śāstra. Not only is the object of worship subtle or gross but so also is the ritual with which it is worshipped. For the simple, Indian worship avails itself of the ordinary incidents of daily life understood by even the most ignorant. And so we see the tending of the idol, waking it, bathing it, giving it food, putting it to sleep and so forth. In ordinary worship there is the offer of flowers, light incense and the like Upāchāra. In the subtle inner or mental worship (Antarpujā) these are but symbols. Thus the Jñāneshvara Samhitā cited in the Mantrayogarahasyanirṇaya speaks of the offering of "flowers of feeling" (Bhāvapushpa) to the Divinity—namely the virtues of selflessness (Anahangkāra) desirelessness (Arāga) pridelessness (Adambha) freedom from malice and envy (Advesha, Amātsaryyam) and infatuation and delusion (Amadaḥ and Amoha) and control over the feelings and mind (Akshobhaka; Amanaka). He who can truly make such offerings to Devī is a high Sādhaka indeed. The Śāstra makes wonderful provision for all types. It recognises that there must be a definite object to which the mind must turn; chooses that object with a view to the capacities of the Sādhaka; and similarly regulates the ensuing worship. Much ignorant talk takes place as to the supposed worship of the Formless. Worship implies an object of worship and every object has some form. But that form and the ritual varies to meet the needs of differing capacities and temperaments; commencing with the more or less anthropomorphic image (or Doll; Putali, as those who dislike such worship call it) with its material service reproducing the ways of daily life, passing through

pretures emblems Yantias, and mental worship to adoration of the Point of Light (Jyotirbindu) in which at length, consciousness being merged, all worship ceases.

The Shaktirahasya summarises the stages of progress in a short verse, thus :—"By images, ceremonies, mind, identification, and knowing the Self, a mortal attains Kaivalya."

In the same way meditation is either gross (Sthūla) or subtle (Sūkshma). The forms of the Mother of the Universe are threefold. There is first the Supreme (Para) form of which the Vishnuyāmala says "None know." There is next Her subtle form which consists of Mantra. But as the mind cannot settle itself upon that which is formless She appears also in physical form as celebrated in the Devastotras of the Purānas and Tantras.

The third principle to be noticed is the part which the body is made to take in the ritual. Necessarily there is action in any case to carry out the ritual but this is so prescribed as to emphasise the mental operation (Mānassi Kriyā) and in addition certain symbolic gestures (Mudrā) are prescribed. The body is made to take its part in the ritual, the mental processes being thus emphasized and intensified. This is based on a well known natural tendency. When we speak with conviction and intensity of feeling we naturally adopt appropriate movements of the body and gestures of the hands. We thus speak with the whole body.

Take for example Nyāsa which like Yantra is peculiar to the Tantras. The object of the Sādhaka is to identify himself with the Devatā he contemplates and thus to attain Devatābhāva for which it is, in its many forms, a most powerful means. Regarding the body of the Devatā as composed of Bīja mantras he not merely imagines that his own body is so composed but he actually places (Nyāsa means placing) these Bijas with the tips of his fingers on the various parts of his own body. The Abhishta Devatā is thus in imagination (expressed by outward acts) placed in each of the parts and members of the Sādhaka's body and then with the motion of his arms he, by Vyāpaka Nyāsa, as it were, spreads the presence of the Devatā all over his body. He thus feels himself permeated in every part by the presence of Devatā and identified with the Divine Self in that its form. Again with certain ritual acts Mudrā is made. This Mudrā expresses by the hands the thought of the worshipper of which it is some kind of manual shorthand. Thus when making Matsya Mudrā, in offering

water, the hands are formed into the likeness of a fish indicating thereby that the Sādhaka offers not merely the small quantity of water contained in the ritual vessel but all the oceans with the fish and other animals therein.

A further important point for consideration is that the mental Vritti is not only strengthened by accompanying physical action but by a prolonged repetition of either or both. There may be a literal repetition of the same or similar words and their accompanying ideas of which a prominent example is Japa of Mantra with which I have dealt in my paper on the Varnamāla; or the object of contemplation may be severed into parts, as where meditation is done not simply on the Devatā as a whole but on each of the parts of His body and then on the whole; or a particular result, such as the dissolution of the Tattvas in Bhūta-shuddhi, may be analysed into the component parts of a process commencing with the first movement and ending with the last. Repetition of a word and idea fixes it in the mind and if the same essential thought can be presented in varied forms the effect is more powerful and at the same time less calculated to tire. "Vain repetition" is itself in the mouths of many a vain criticism when not a platitude. If it is in fact vain it is vain. But it need not be so. In the current gross way of looking at things it is asked "Will the Deity yield (like a modern politician) to repeated clamour?" The answer is the Devatā is not so affected. What is in fact affected is the mind of the Sādhaka himself which being thus purified by insistent effort, becomes a fit medium for the manifestation of a divine consciousness (Devatābhāva). In fact Indian ritual cannot be understood unless the Vedantic principles of which they are a particular practical application are understood.

Symbolism exists in all religions in varying degrees. The Tantra Shāstra is extraordinarily full of it in all its kinds—form, colour, language, number, action. The subject is a highly interesting but very lengthy one. I can only make two remarks with regard to it here. There is a good deal of what is called erotic symbolism in some of the Tantras. This is apt to shock many English people who are by no means all so moral in fact as some might think this sensitivity suggests. It does not necessarily carry this suggestion to me. Such fear of erotic symbols is rather indicative in the generality of cases of natural impurity and want of self control. The great Edward Carpenter speaks of the "impure hush" in these matters. A person whose mind is naturally bent towards sensual

thoughts but who desires to control them has no doubt a fear which one readily understands of anything which may provoke such thoughts. But such a man is in this respect lower than him who looks upon natural things in a natural way without fear of injury to himself; and infinitely lower than he to whom all is a manifestation of the one Consciousness and who realises this in those things which are the cause of fall to the imperfectly self-governed Pashu. Nothing is in itself impure. It is the mind which makes it so. It is however absolutely right that persons who feel that they have not sufficient self-control should, until they gain it, avoid what they think may do them injury. Recently an old, and I had thought experienced, man wrote to me that he had come across in the Tantras "obscenities the very reading of which was demoralising." The very fact that these portions of the scripture had such an effect on him is a sufficient reason that he and others similarly situated should not read them. Neither should such persons study art from the nude, the curious and obscene customs recorded by anthropology, certain parts of the medical science; works on sexual psychopathy or the casuistical works of Catholic Theology. The Tantra Shâstra recognises this principle by certain injunctions into which I cannot enter here. The Kulâmava expressly says that the Chapter on the Wine ritual is not to be read; (*Na pathed âsavollâsa*) that is by the unqualified. Here two rules are to be observed. No one is to think of these sexual matters except in and during the course of worship when the Mantras and the direction which they give to thought protect the Sâdhaka from evil influences. Secondly no one is to worship in this way unless duly qualified. It was never meant that these Shâstra should be read by any and every one from mere curiosity only. Even then portions of some Shâstras may seem to their modern reader needlessly obscene; though as to this it is to be remembered both that they were written in an age when, in the east as in the west, a spade was called a spade and not a horticultural instrument; and that their readers were meant to be persons who, having passed through the necessary disciplines had attained to both knowledge and self-control. Similarly the casuistical works of catholic theologians contain obscenities some of a very filthy kind. They were not however written for public or curious reading but for priests whose fortified character protected them (it was hoped) from the influences of their libidinous suggestions. Erotic symbolism however (for to this I now limit myself) is not peculiar to the Tantras. It is as old as the hills and may be found in other scriptures. It is a matter of embarrassment to the class I have mentioned that the Bible is not free from it. If we would

picture the cosmic process as we must take the materials therefore from our own life. It is not always necessary to go to the erotic life. But man has generally done so for reasons I need not discuss here; and his selections must sometimes be admitted to be very apt. It has however been said that throughout Shākta symbolism and pseudo-philosophising there lies at the basis of the whole system the conception of sexual relationship as the ultimate explanation of the universe. Reading these words as they stand they are nonsense. What is true is that some Shākta Tantras convey philosophic and scientific truths by the media of erotic imagery; which is another matter. But so also does Upanishad. The charge of pseudo-philosophy betrays equal ignorance unless the Advaitavedānta is such. The Shākta Tantra simply presents the Vedantic teachings in a symbolical ritualistic form for the worshipper to whom it also prescribes the means whereby they may be realised in fact. Those who think otherwise have not mastered the alphabet of the subject.

Much I have omitted including Nilasādhana which is however of limited application being practised by some Vira Sādhakas in the burning ground (Shmashāna). The limits of this paper however forbid more, except what I have to say on the Panchatattva ritual the notoriety of which has thrown into the shade not only the topics with which I have dealt but every other, including the valuable philosophical presentment of Vedānta contained in the Shākta Tantra. Notwithstanding, and indeed because of, the offhand and (in certain respects) ignorant condemnation which this ritual has received, the interests of both scholarship and fairness (which by the way should be identical) require that we should first ascertain the facts, think clearly and fearlessly and then determine without prejudice. From both the Shāstric and historical point of view the subject is of such importance that it is not possible for me to here deal with it otherwise than in a very general way. It is necessary however in a paper on Upāsana to at least touch upon the matter because as against everything one says about the Tantras there is raised the express or implied query "That may be all very well. But what about the infamous Panchamakāra?" Anything said in favour of the Shāstra is thus discounted in advance.

We must first disentangle the general *principles* involved from their particular *application*. The principle may be sound and yet the application may not be so. We may for instance approve striving for Vedantic Audasīya, whilst at the same time we may rightly reject the Aghora's application of it in eating human carrion. Next let us see what in fact is the ritual application of these principles. Then



let us judge the *intention* with which the ritual was prescribed. A principle may be good and the intention may be good but its application may be intrinsically bad, or at least dangerous and therefore inexpedient as leading to abuse. In life it is a mistake to altogether neglect the pragmatistical aspect of any theory. Logic and life do not always go hand in hand. Lastly let us see whether the *application* is good or bad or inexpedient; or whether it is partially one or the other.

The three chief physical appetites of man are eating and drinking whereby his body is sustained and sexual intercourse whereby it is propagated. Considered in themselves they are natural and harmless. Manu puts this very clearly when he says "There is no wrong (*Dosha*) in the eating of meat and drinking of wine nor in sexual intercourse for these are natural inclinations of men. But abstention therefrom is productive of great fruit." Here I may interpose and say that the Tantrik method is not a forced abstention but a regulated use with the right *Bhāva* that is *Advaitabhāva*. When this is perfected natural desires drop away (except so far as their fulfilment is absolutely necessary for physical existence) as things which are otherwise of no account. How is this done? By transforming *Pashubhāva* into *Virabhāva*. The latter is the feeling, disposition, and character of a *Vira*.

All things spring from and are at base *Ānanda* or Bliss whether it is perceived or not. The latter therefore exists in two forms; as *Mukti* which is *Ānandasvarūpa*, and as *Bhukti* or worldly bliss. Tantrik *Sādhana* claims to give both. The *Vira* thus knows that *Jivātmā* and *Paramātmā* are one; that it is the One *Shiva* who appears in the form of the multitude of men and who acts, suffers, and enjoys *through* them. The *Shivasvarūpa* is Bliss itself (*Paramānanda*). The Bliss of enjoyment (*Bhogananda*) is one and the same Bliss manifesting itself through the limiting forms of mind and matter. Who is it who then enjoys and what Bliss is thus manifested? It is *Shiva* in the form of the Universe (*Vishv-rūpa*) who enjoys, and the manifested bliss is a limited form of that Supreme Bliss which in His ultimate nature He is. In his physical functions the *Vira* identifies himself with the collectivity of all functions which constitute the universal life. He is then consciously *Shiva* in the form of his own and all other lives. As *Shiva* exists both in his *Svarūpa* and as the world (*Vishv-rūpa*) so union may, and should, be had with Him in both aspects. These are known as *S* and *Sthāla S* respectively. The

Sādhaka is taught not to think that we are one with the Divine in liberation only, but here and now in every act we do. For in truth all such is Shakti. It is Shiva who as Shakti is acting in and through the Sādhaka. So though, according to the Vaidik injunctions, there is no eating or drinking before worship, it is said in the Shākta Tantra that he who worships Kālikā when hungry and thirsty angers Her. Those who worship a God other than their own Essential Self may think to please Him by such acts but to the Shākta, Shiva and Jiva are one and the same. Why then should one give pain to Jiva? Here is sense indeed. It was I think Professor Royce who said, borrowing (though probably unconsciously) an essential Tantrik idea, that God suffers and enjoys *in* and *as* and *through* man. This is so. Though the Brahmasvarūpa is nothing but the perfect, actionless Bliss, yet it is also the one Brahman who as Jiva suffers and enjoys; for there is none other. When this is realised in every natural function then each exercise thereof ceases to be a mere animal act and becomes a religious rite—a Yajna. Every function is a part of the Divine Action (Shakti) in Nature. Thus when taking drink in the form of wine the Vira knows it to be Tārādravamaya that is “the Saviour Herself in liquid form.” How (it is said) can he who truly sees in it the Saviour Mother receive from it harm? Meditating on Kundalini as pervading his body to the tip of his tongue, thinking himself to be Light which is also the Light of the wine he takes, he says “I am She” (Sāham) “I am Brahman” “I Myself offer Ahuti to my own self Svāhā.” When therefore the Vira eats, drinks or has sexual intercourse he does so not with the thought of himself as a separate individual satisfying his own peculiar limited wants; an animal fleeing as it were from nature the enjoyment he has, but thinking of himself in such enjoyment as Shiva, saying “Shivo’ham,” “Bhairavo’ham”. It is a fact that right sexual union may, if associated with meditation and ritual, be the means towards attainment of liberation; though persons who take a vulgar and animal view of this function will not readily understand it. The function is thereby enobled and receives a new significance. This is Virabhāva.

The notions of the Pashu are in varying degrees the reverse of all this. If of the lowest type, he only knows himself as a separate entity who enjoys. Some more sophisticated, yet in truth ignorant, enjoy and are ashamed; and thus think it unseemly to implicate God in the supposed coarseness of His handiwork as physical function. Some again who are higher regard these functions as an acceptable gift of God to them as lowly creatures who enjoy and are separate from Him—

The Vaidikas took enjoyment to be the fruit of the sacrifice and the gift of the Devas. Others who are yet higher offer all that they do to the One Lord. This dualistic worship is embodied in the command of the Gita "Tat madarpanam kurusva." Do all this as an offering to Me. What is "all"? Does it mean all or some particular things only? But the highest Sādhana from the Monistic standpoint, and which in its Advaitabhāva differs from all others, is that of the Shākta Tantra which proclaims that the Sādhaka *is* Shiva and that it is Shiva who in the form of the Sādhaka enjoys.

So much for the principle involved to which, whether it be accepted or not, cannot be truly denied nobility and grandeur.

The application of this principle is of greatly less interest and importance. To certain of such ritual applications may be assigned the charges commonly made against this Shāstra, though without accurate knowledge and discrimination. It was the practice of an age the character of which was not that of our own. The particular shape which the ritual has taken is due I think, to historical causes. Though the history of the Āgamas is still obscure it seems to me that this Panchatattva Karma is in substance a continuation, in altered form, of the old Vaidik usage in which eating and drinking were a part of the sacrifice (Yajna). So any extra ritual drinking called "useless" (Vrīthapāna) or Pashu drinking (Pashupāna) in which the Western (sometimes a hostile critic of the Tantra Shāstra) so largely indulges, is a great sin. The influence however of the original Buddhism and Jainism were against the consumption of meat and wine; an influence which continued to operate on post-Buddhistic Hinduism up to the present day, except among certain followers of the Āgamas who claimed to represent the earlier traditions and usages. I say "certain", because for the Pashu there are substitutes for wine and meat and so forth; and for the Divya the Tattvas are not material things but Yoga processes. I have shown the similarities between the Vaidik and Tantrik ritual in my paper on "Shakti and Shākta" to which I refer you. If this view of mine be correct, whilst the importance and prevalence of the ancient ritual will diminish with the passage of time and the changes in religion which it effects, the principle will always retain its inherent value for the followers of the Advaita Vedānta. It is capable of application according to the modern spirit without recourse to Chakras and their ritual details in the ordinary daily life of the householder within the bounds of his Dharmashāstra.

Nevertheless the ritual has existed and still exists though at the present day often in a form free from the objections which are raised against certain ancient liberties of practice which led to abuse. It is necessary therefore both for the purpose of accuracy and of a just criticism of its present adherents to consider the *intention* with which the ritual was prescribed and the *modes* in which that intention was given effect. It is not the fact, as commonly alleged, that the intention of the Shâstra was to promote and foster any form of sensual indulgence. If it was, then the Tantras would not be a Shâstra at all whatever else they might contain. Shâstra comes from the root "Shas" to control; that is Shâstra exists to control men within the bounds set by Dharma. The intention of this ritual, when rightly understood, is on the contrary is to regulate natural appetite, to curb it, to lift it from the trough of mere animality; and by associating it with religious worship, to effect a passage from the state of desire of the ignorant Pashu to the completed Divyabhâva in which there is desirelessness. It is another instance of the general principle to which I have referred that man must be led from the gross to the subtle. A Sâdhaka once well explained the matter to me thus: Let us suppose he said that man's body is a vessel filled with oil which is the passions. If you simply empty it and do nothing more, fresh oil will take its place issuing from the Source of Desire which you have left undestroyed. If however into the vessel there is dropped by slow degrees the Water of Knowledge (Jnâna) it will, as being heavier than oil, descend to the bottom of the vessel and will then expel an equal quantity of oil. In this way all the oil of passion is gradually expelled and no more can re-enter for the water of Jnâna will then have wholly taken its place. Here again the general principle of the method is good. As the Latins said "If you attempt to expel nature with a pitchfork it will come back again". You must infuse something else as a medicament against the ills which follow the natural tendency of desires to exceed the limits which Dharma sets to them.

The particular application of this method in the Shâkta Âgama is one of considerable complexity and by no means free from difficulty; though from the way some talk one would not suppose this to be so.

Generally speaking however we may distinguish not only between Dakshinâchâra and Vâmâchâra but between a Dakshina and Vâmâ division of the latter Âchâra itself. It is true that even the practice of the former division will not have the approval of the latter and

from a generally accepted moral standpoint. For the taking of meat and wine have not yet been recognised by the world in general as sins; and sexual union (Maithuna) is had with what the Tantras call the Ādya shakti that is the Sādhaka's own Prakriti or wife. Thus the Kaulikārchanaṭṭīkā says that the best Shakti is Ādyashakti; and it is only if she be disqualified (Anadhikārinī) that another is to be taken. Similarly Ādyamadya or wine = Vijaya (hemp); Ādyamudrā = Dhanyajā (made from paddy); Ādyashuddhi or meat = Ārjdraka (ginger); Ādyamina or fish = Jambira (citron); and quoting from the Tantrāntara it says that worship without these Ādya forms is fruitless. From a western standpoint the ritual is up to this point free from moral objection provided that there is no excess.

Hindus however of other sects, and those who do not practise the Chakra ritual may object to the use of wine in any way. There is a common misconception here. All Hindus whether Vāmāchārits or others condemn the extra-ritual consumption of wine which is regarded as one of the great sins. But the Tantrika view is that the prohibition against wine does not apply to its ritual use: though all other drinking is called useless (Vrithapāna) or pashu drinking (Pashupāna) and is sinful. In the same way a Christian abstainer from wine might yet receive it in the eucharistic sacrament. He does not then take it as wine but (if a believer in transubstantiation) as the blood of the Lord, Who in His lifetime never condemned but by His conduct approved of the drinking of wine and bade men take it with bread in the sacrament of His body and blood. In the Tantra, it is as, I have said, spiritualised by Mantra and Upāsana. As in the Vaidik Yajna the exhilarating Soma was drunk, so he drinks wine made from many substances. As a matter of fact drops of wine are sprinkled on the Prasāda in Durgapūjā and on the Prasāda which all consume at the temple of Jagānnatha at Puri; though this is not generally known and perhaps will not be admitted. If wine is absolutely prohibited under all circumstances, then it is as sinful to take it sprinkled on food as to drink it from a cup in moderation. The dualistic notion entertained by both some eastern and westerners that the "dignity" of worship is offended by association with natural function is erroneous. As regards wine and bread (which answers to Mudrā) worship is in fact associated with the drinking of wine and the eating of bread in the Christian Eucharist.

On the Vāmā side however the performance of the ritual with the another Shakti lays it open to objection. Even here we must avoid any

all founded condemnation. We should exclude cases of the Shaiva wife for after all the established social usages of any community must be taken into account. In a monogamous country polygamy may be immoral. But where polygamy is recognised, as it was amongst the Jews, it is absurd to call those who practised what their law allowed immoral. Further some think that a kind of unlimited promiscuity is allowed. This is not so. There may have been hypocrites wandering around the country and its women who sought to cover their lasciviousness with the cloak of a pretended religion. But this is not true Sâdhanâ. The relation with the Shakti should be one of a generally permanent character. It is indeed held that a Shakti who is abandoned takes away with her the Sâdhaka's Punya. Still it is the fact that in what are called the higher stages of a Kaula's progress there are liberties accorded him which are not allowed to ordinary men and eventually it is said he reaches Svecchâchâra. This doctrine again is not peculiar to the Tantra Shâstra. It is in the Upanishads which say that the Brahmajnânî is beyond both good and evil (Dharma and Adharma.) Whether the practical application of this doctrine can be justified is another matter. Antinomian notions to the effect that a Knower is beyond good and evil are not however peculiar to India. They have displayed themselves in all ages and countries in connection with what is called "Pantheism"; such as in the case of that western heresy the followers of which called themselves "The Brethren of the Free Spirit" with whose doctrine and that of the Svecchâchâra Kaulas there is, in several matters, an even verbal similarity. Other instances may be given such as the Gnostic Antinomianism; the new Manichæans; Amalric of Bena with his doctrine "to those constituted in love no sin is imputed"; Johann Hartmann "a man free in spirit is impeccable"; the "pantheistic Libertines" and "Familists" and Ranters of the Sixteenth Century "Nothing is sin but what a man thinks to be so": "God sees no sin in him who knows himself to be in a state of grace" (Gataker's Antinomianism discovered and refuted 1632); the Alumbrados or Spanish Illuminate (prabuddha) Mystics of the sixteenth century; Magdalena de Cruce d'Aguilar and others (Menendes y Pelayo—"Historia de los Heterodoxos Espanoles") whose teachings according to Malvasia (Catalogus Omnium haeresium et conciliorum) contained the following proposition "A perfect man cannot sin; even an act which outwardly regarded must be looked upon as vicious ~~and is therefore not a sin~~ the soul which lives in mystical union with God."

Similar doctrines are alleged of the French Illumines called Guernets of the Seventeenth Century, the German Theosophers of Schopenherr. Eva Von Buttler: the Muckers of the Eighteenth Century; some modern Russian sects (Tsakni "La Russie Sectaire") and others. Whilst it is to be remembered that in these and other cases we must receive with caution the accounts given by opponents there is no doubt that Antinomianism, Svechchhâchâra and the like is a well known phenomenon in religious history often associated with so-called "Pantheistic" doctrines. It is entirely erroneous to suppose that it is an intellectual and moral monstrosity peculiar to this country, and "the Tantra." Some antinomian doctrines on the contrary such as those of the Italian nuns Spighi and Buonamici recorded by Bishop Scipio de Ricci (*L'uomo e nato libero y nessuno lo puo legare nello spirito*: "man is born free and none can chain his free Spirit" and the consequence of this teaching) seem to me a Paishâkika bhâshya or demoniac commentary on the Tântrika Virâchâra. Even however as regards true Virâchâra the detached student of religions will remember two points which are made by Professor de la Vallée Poussin, the Catholic Belgian Sanskritist, in one of his works on the Buddhist Tantra (*Adhikarmapradîpa* 141) and by Dr. H. Delacroix the author of "*Le Mysticisme spéculatif en Allemagne au quatorzième siècle*" in which the doctrine and practice of the Brethren I have mentioned is described. (See also Preger's *Geshichte der Deutschen Mystik im Mittelalter*). The latter warns us from placing implicit reliance on the accounts of adversaries. He also says (p. 64) that one must judge a doctrine by what its sincere adherents hold and do, and not by the practices of imposters who always lie to sects holding theories which offer opportunities for libertinism. The former observes that when judging of the morality of these Tantrik rituals we must not forget the *conditions* under which only they are according to the Shâstra admissible, otherwise condemnation becomes excessive. ("Je crois d'ailleurs qu'on a exagéré le caractère d'immoralité des actes liturgiques de Maithuna faute d'avoir fixé les diverses conditions dans lesquelles il doivent être pratiqués").

After all when everything unfavourable has been said the abuses on this head are not to be compared either in nature or extent with those of the West with its widespread sordid prostitution, its drunkenness and gluttony, its sexual perversities and its demoniacal pathological enormities. To take a specific example Is the drinking of wine by a limited number of Vamâc Âri Tantriks in the whole of

this country to be compared with (say) the consumption of whiskey in this single city? Is this whisky drinking less worthy of condemnation because it is Pashupâna or done for the satisfaction of sensual appetite alone? The dualistic notion that the "dignity" of religion is impaired by association with natural function is erroneous.

An English writer, doubtless referring to these and other wrongs, has recently expressed the opinion that during the last quarter of a century we Westerns have been living in what (with some few ameliorating features) is the wickedest epoch in the world's history. However this may be if our own great sins were here known, the abuses real and alleged of Tantriks would be seen in better proportion. Moreover an effective reply would be to hand against those who are always harping on Devadasis and other sensualities of, or connected with, Indian worship. India's general present record for temperance and sexual control is better than that of the West. It is no doubt a just observation that abuses committed under the supposed sanction of religion are worse than wrongs done with the sense that they are wrong. That there have been hypocrites covering the satisfaction of their appetites with the cloak of religion is likely. But all Sâdhakas are not hypocrites and all cases do not show abuse. I cannot therefore help thinking that this constant insistence on one particular feature of the Shâstra, together with ignorance both of the particular rites and neglect and ignorance of all else in the Âgama Scripture is simply part of the general polemic carried on in some quarters against the Indian religion. The Tantra Shâstra is doubtless thought to be a very useful heavy gun and is therefore constantly fired in the attack. There may be some who will be disappointed if it be shown that the weapon is not as formidable as was thought. All this is not to say that there have not been abuses or that some forms of rite will not be considered repugnant, or that these or other forms are not in fact open to objection founded on the interests of society at large. All this again is not to say that I counsel the acceptance of any such extreme theories or practice. According to the Shâstra itself some of these methods, even if carried out as directed, have their dangers. This is obvious in the actions of a lower class of men whose conduct has made the Scripture notorious. The ordinary man will then ask :—"Why then court danger when there is enough of it in ordinary life?" I may here recall an observation of the Emperor Akbar ~~which, though not made with regard to the~~ in hand, is yet



It is necessary for me to so guard myself because those who cannot judge with detachment are prone to think that others who deal fairly and dispassionately with any doctrine or practice are necessarily its adherents and the counsellors of it others.

My own view is this. Probably we should be in general better if we took neither Alcohol or Meat particularly the latter, which is the source of much disease. Though it is said that killing for sacrifice is no "killing" it can hardly be denied that total abstention from slaughter of animals constitutes a more complete conformity with Ahimsa or doctrine of non-injury to any being. A feeling of this kind is growing in the West where even the Meat-eater, impelled by disgust and a rising regard for decency, hides away the slaughter houses producing the meat which he openly displays at his table. In the same sexual errors are common to-day and nothing should be done or said which fosters it; nor was this the intention of the Shâstra.

I understand the basis on which these Tantrik practices rest. Thus what seems repellent is sought to be justified on the ground that the Sâdhaka should be above all likes and dislikes, and should see Brahman in all things. But the western critic will say that we must judge practice from the practical standpoint. It was this consideration which was at the back of the statement of Professor de la Vallée Poussin (*Bouddhisme Études et Matériaux*) (14.31) that there is in this country what Taine called a "reasoning madness" which made the Hindu stick at no conclusion however strange, willingly accepting even the absurd. ("Il y régné des l'origine ce que Taine appelle la folie raisonnée. Les Hindoues vont volontiers jusqu'à l'absurde"). This may be too strongly put; but the saying contains this truth that the Indian temperament is an absolutist one. But such a temperament if it has its fascinating grandeurs also carries with it the defects of its qualities; namely dangers from which those who make a compromise between life and reason are free.

After all as I have elsewhere said the question of this particular ritual practice is largely of historical interest only. Such practice is to-day, under the influences of the time, being transformed, where it is not altogether disappearing, with other ritual customs of a past age. I am only interested here to show firstly that the practice is not a modern invention but is a continuation of ancient Vaidik usage; secondly that it claims, like the rest of the ritual with which I have dealt, to be an application of the Advaitavâda of the Upanishads - and lastly that (putting aside things generally repugnant and

practices which have led to abuse) a great principle is involved which may find legitimate and enobling application in all daily acts of physical function within the bounds of man's ordinary Dharma. Those who so practice this principle may become the true Virâ who has been said to be not the man of great physical or sexual strength, the great fighter, eater, drinker, or the like but

*Ītendriyah sattyavâdî nityânnasthâna tatparah  
Kâmadî validânnashcha sa vîra iti gîyate.*

“He is a Hero who has controlled his senses, and is a speaker of truth; who is ever engaged in worship and has sacrificed lust and all other passions”.

The attainment of these qualities is the aim, whatever is said of the means, of all Tantrik Sâdhanâ.

## KUNDALINĪ SHAKTI.

(YOGA)

All the world (I speak of course of those interested in such subjects) is beginning to speak of Kundalinī Shakti "cette fameuse Kundalinī" as a French friend of mine calls Her. There is considerable talk about the Chakras and the Serpent-Power but lack of understanding as to what they mean. This as usual is sought to be covered by an air of mystery, mystical mists and sometimes the attitude; "I should much like to tell you if only I were allowed to give it out." There is no more fertile soil of humbug than "Mysticism" which is often confused thinking. I do not of course speak of true Mysticism. Like all other matters in this Indian Shāstra the basis of this Yoga is essentially rational. Its thought, like that of the ancients generally whether of east or west, has in general the form and brilliance of a cut gem. It is this quality which makes it so dear to some of those who have had to wade through the slush of much modern thought and literature. No attempt has hitherto been made to explain the general principles which underlie it. This form of Yoga is an application of the general principles relating to Shakti with which I have already dealt. The subject has both a theoretical and practical aspect. The latter is concerned with the teaching of the method in such a way that the aspirant may give effect to it. This cannot be learnt from books but only from the Guru who has himself successfully practised this Yoga. Apart from difficulties, inherent in written explanations, it cannot be practically learnt from books because the carrying out of the method is affected by the nature and capacity of the Sādhaka and what takes place during his Sādhana. Further, though some general features of the method have been explained to me, I have had no practical experience myself of this Power. I am not speaking as a Yogi in this method, which I am not; but as one who has read and studied the Shāstra on this matter and has had the further advantage of some oral explanations which have enabled me to better understand it. I have dealt with this practical side, so far as it is possible to me, in my forthcoming work on the "Serpent Power". Even so far as the matter can be dealt with in writing I cannot within the limits of such a paper as this deal with it in any way fully. A detailed description of the Chakras and their significance cannot be attempted here. What I wish to do is to treat the subject on the broadest lines

possible and to explain the fundamental principles which underlie this yoga method. It is because these are not understood that there is such confused thinking and misty, if not mystical, talk upon the subject. How many persons for instance can correctly answer the question "What is Kundālini Shakti?" One may be told that it is a Power or Shakti; that it is coiled like a serpent in the Mūlādhāra; and that it is awakened and goes up through the Chakras to the Sahasrāra. But what Shakti is it? Generally it seems to be thought that it is one particular Shakti named Kundālini amongst the many moving Shaktis which make up the Universe. This is an error as later shown. Why again is it coiled like a serpent? What is the meaning of this? What is the nature of the Power? Why is it in the Mūlādhāra? What is the meaning of "wakening" the power. Why if awakened should it go up? What are the Chakras? It is easy to say that they are regions or lotuses. What are they in themselves? Why have each of the lotuses a different number of petals? What is a petal? What and why are the "Letters" on them? What is the effect of going to the Sahasrāra: and how does that effect come about? These and other similar questions require an answer before this form of Yoga can be understood. I have said something as to the Letters in my paper on the origin of Mantra. With these and other general questions, rather than with the details of the six Chakras, I will deal to-day.

In the first place it is necessary to remember the fundamental principle of the Tantra Shāstra to which I have already referred viz that that man is a microcosm (Kshudrabrahmānda). Whatever exists in the outer universe exists in him. All the Tattvas and the worlds are within him and so are the supreme Shiva-Shakti. The body may be divided into two main parts, namely the head and trunk on one hand and the legs on the other. In man the centre of the body is between these two at the base of the spine where the legs begin. Supporting the trunk and through it the whole body there is the spinal cord. This is the axis of the body just as Mount Meru is the axis of the earth. Hence man's spine is called Merudanda the Meru or axis staff. The legs and feet are gross matter which show less signs of consciousness than the trunk with its spinal white and grey matter; which trunk itself is greatly subordinate in this respect to the head containing the organ of mind or physical brain with its white and grey matter. The position of the white and grey matter in the head and spinal column is as follows. The body and legs below the centre are the

universe From the centre upwards consciousness more freely manifests through the spinal and cerebral centres Here there are the seven upper regions or Lokas a term which Satyānanda in his commentary on Īśha Upanishad says means "what are seen" (lokyante) that is attained and are hence the fruits of Karma in the form of particular re-birth. These regions namely Bhuh, Bhuvah, Svah, Tapah, Janah, Mahah, Satya Lokas correspond with the six centres ; five in the trunk, the sixth in the lower cerebral centre ; and the seventh in the upper Brain or Satyaloka the abode of the supreme Shiva-Shakti.

The six centres are the Mūlādhāra or root support situated at the base of the spinal column in a position midway in the perinaeum between the root of the genitals and the anus. Above it in the region of the genitals, abdomen, heart, chest or throat and in the forehead between the two eye (bhrumadhya) are the Svādishthāna, Manipūra, Anāhata, Vishuddha and Ājñā Chakras or lotuses (Padma) respectively. These are the chief centres, though the books speak of others such as the Lalana and Manas and Soma Chakras. In fact in the Advaita Martanda a modern Sanskrit book by the late Guru of the Mahārāja of Kashmir, some fifty Chakras and Ādhāras are mentioned : though the six stated are the chief upon which all accounts agree. And so it is said "How can there be any Siddhi for him who knows not the six Chakras the sixteen Ādhāras, the four Ethere and the three Lakshas in his own body?" The seventh region beyond the Chakras is the upper brain, the highest centre of manifestation of Consciousness in the body and therefore the abode of the supreme Shiva-Shakti. When "abode" is said it is not meant of course that the Supreme is there placed in the sense of our placing namely it is there and not elsewhere. The Supreme is never localized whilst its manifestations are. It is everywhere both within and without the body, but is said to be in the Sahasrāra because it is there that the Supreme Shiva-Shakti are realised. And this must be so, because consciousness is realised by entering in and passing through the highest manifestation of mind the Sattvamaya Buddhi above and beyond which is Chit and Chidrupini Shakti Themselves. From their Shiva-Shakti Tattva aspect are evolved Mind in its form as Buddhi, Ahangkāra, Manas and associated senses (Indriya) the centre of which is in and above the Ājñā Chakra and below the Sahasrāra. From Ahangkāra proceed the Tanmātra or generals of the sense particulars which evolve the five forms of sensible matter (Bhūta) namely Ākāśa (Ether) Vāyu ( Air ) Agni ( "Fire" ) Apas ( ' Water' )

and Prithivī ( "Earth" ). The English translation given of these terms do not imply that the Bhūtas are the same as the English elements of air, fire, water, earth. The terms indicate varying degrees of matter from the ethereal to the solid. Thus Prithivī or earth is any matter in the Prithivī state ; that is which may be sensed by the Indriya of smell. Mind and matter pervade the whole body. But there are centres therein in which they are predominant. Thus Ajnā is a centre of mind and the five lower Chakras are centres of the five Bhūtas ; Vishuddha of Ākasha ; Anāhata of Vāyu, Manipūra of Agni, Svādishthāna of Apas, and Mūlādhāra of Prithivī.

In short man as a microcosm is the all-pervading Spirit (which most purely manifests in the Sahasrāra) vehicled by Shakti in the form of Mind and Matter the centres of which are the sixth and following five Chakras respectively.

The six Chakras have been identified with the following plexuses commencing from the lowest the Mūlādhāra :—The Sacrococcygeal plexus, the Sacral plexus, the Solar plexus (which forms the great junction of the right and left sympathetic chains Īda and Pingalā) with the cerebro-spinal axis. Connected with this is the Lumbar plexus. Then follows the Cardiac plexus ( Anāhata ) Laryngeal plexus and lastly the Ajnā or cerebellum with its two lobes and above this the Manas Chakra or sensorium within its six lobes, the Soma chakra or middle Cerebrum and lastly the Sahasrāra or upper Cerebrum. To some extent these localizations are yet tentative. This statement may involve an erroneous view of what the Chakras really are and is likely to produce wrong notions concerning them in others. The six Chakras themselves are vital centres within the spinal column in the white and grey matter there. They may however, and probably do, influence and govern the gross tract outside the spine in the bodily region lateral to, and coextensive with, that section of the spinal column in which a particular centre is situate. The Chakras are centres of Shakti as vital force. In other words they are centres of Prānashakti manifested by Prāna-vāyu in the living body, the presiding Devatās of which are names for the Universal Consciousness as It manifests in the form of those centres. The Chakras are not perceptible to the gross senses whatever may be a Yogi's powers to observe what is beyond the senses (atindriya). Even if they were perceptible in the living body which they help to organize they disappear with the disintegration of the organism at death.

In an article on "The physical errors of Hinduism" (Calcutta Review XL 436-440) it was said :—"It would indeed excite the

surprise of our readers to hear that the Hindus, who would not even touch a dead body much less dissect it, (which is incorrect) should possess any anatomical knowledge at all.....It is the Tantras that furnish us with some extraordinary pieces of information concerning the human body....But of all the Hindu Shāstras extant, the Tantras lie in the greatest obscurity....The Tantrik theory, on which the well-known Yoga called 'Shatchakrabhedha' is founded, supposes the existence of six main internal organs, called Chakras or Padmas, all bearing a special resemblance to that famous flower, the lotus. These are placed one above the other, and connected by three imaginary chains, the emblems of the Ganges, the Yamunā, and the Sarasvatī.... Such is the obstinacy with which the Hindus adhere to these erroneous notions, that, even when we show them by actual dissection the non-existence of the imaginary Chakras in the human body, they will rather have recourse to excuses revolting to common-sense than acknowledge the evidence of their own eyes. They say, with a shamelessness unparalleled, that these Padmas exist as long as a man lives, but disappear the moment he dies". This alleged "Shamelessness" reminds me of the story of a doctor who told my father "that he had performed many *post mortems* and had never yet discovered a soul."

The petals of the lotuses vary being 4, 6, 10, 12, 16, 2 respectively; commencing from the Mūlādhāra and ending with Ājñā. There are 50 in all, as are the letters of the alphabet which are in the petals; that is the Mātrikā are associated with the Tattvas since both are products of the same creative Cosmic Process manifesting either as physiological or psychological function. It is noteworthy that the number of the petals is that of the letters leaving out either Ksha or the Vaidik La and that these 50 multiplied by 20 are in the 1000 petals of the Sahasrāra a number which is probably only indicative of multitude and magnitude.

But why it may be asked do the petals vary in number? Why for instance are there 4 in the Mūlādhāra and 6 in the Svādishdhāna? The answer given is that the number of petals in any Chakra is determined by the number and position of the Nādis around that Chakra. Thus four Nādis surrounding and passing through the vital movements of the Muladharā Chakra give it the appearance of a lotus of four petals. The petals are thus configurations made by the position of Nādis at any particular centre. These Nādis are not those which are known to the Vaidya or Medical Shāstras. The latter are gross

physical nerves But the former here spoken of are called Yoga nâdis and are subtle channels ( Vîvarta ) along which the finer currents flow. The term Nâdi comes from the root "Nad" which means motion. The body is filled with an uncountable number of Nâdis. If they were revealed to the eye the body would present the appearance of a highly complicated chart of ocean currents. Superficially the water seem one and the same. But examination shows that it is moving with varying degrees of force in all directions. All these lotuses exist in the spinal column.

An Indian physician and sanskritist has in the Guy's Hospital Gazette expressed the opinion that better anatomy is given in the Tantras than in the purely medical works of the Hindus. I have attempted elsewhere to co-relate present and ancient anatomy and physiology. I can, however, only here mention some salient points.

The Merudanda is the vertebral column. Western Anatomy divides it into five regions ; and it is to be noted in corroboration of the theory here exposed that these correspond with the regions in which the five Chakras are situate. The central spinal system comprised the brain or encephalon contained within the skull (in which are the Lalana, Âjnâ, Manas, Soma Chakras and the Sahasrâra) ; as also the spinal cord extending from the upper border of the Atlas below the cerebellum and descending to the second lumbar vertebra where it tapers to a point called the *filum terminale*. Within the spine is the cord, a compound of grey and white brain matter in which are the five lower Chakras. It is noteworthy that the *filum terminale* was formerly thought to be mere fibrous cord, an unsuitable vehicle one might think for the Mûlâdhâra Chakra and Kundalî Shakti. Recent microscopic investigations have, however, disclosed the existence of highly sensitive grey matter in the *filum terminale* which represents the position of the Mûlâdhâra. According to western science the spinal cord is not merely a conductor between the periphery and the centres of sensation and volition but is also an independent centre or group of centres. The Sushumnâ is a Nâdi in the centre of the spinal column. Its base is called the Brahmadvâra or Gate of Brahman. As regards the physiological relations of the Chakras all that can be said with any degree of certainty is that the four above the Mûlâdhâra have relation to the genito-excretory, digestive, cardiac and respiratory functions, and that the two upper centres the Âjnâ (with its associated Chakras) and the Sahasrâra denote various forms of cerebral activity ending in the repose of pure, conscious-



ness therein gained through Yoga. The Nâdis on each side called Idâ and Pingalâ are the left and right sympathetic cords crossing the central column from one side to the other making at the Âjñâ with the Sushumnâ a three-fold knot called Triveni; which is said to be the spot in the Medulla where the sympathetic cords join together and whence they take their origin. These Nâdis together with the two lobed Âjñâ and the Sushumnâ forming the figure of the *caduceus* of the God Mercury which is said by some to represent them.

How then does this Yoga compare with others?

It will now be asked what are the general principles which underlie the Yoga practice above described. How is it that the rousing of Kundalinî Shakti and Her union with Shiva effects the state of ecstatic union (Samâdhi) and spiritual experience which is alleged. The reader who has understood the general principles recorded in the previous essays should, if he have not already divined it, readily appreciate the answer here given.

In the first place there are two main lines of Yoga namely Dhyâna or Bhâvanâ Yoga and Kundalî Yoga the subject of this work; and there is a marked difference between the two. The first class of Yoga is that in which ecstasy (Samâdhi) is attained by intellective processes (Kriyâ jñâna) of meditation and the like with the aid it may be of auxiliary processes of Mantra or Hathayoga (other than the rousing of Kundalî Shakti) and by detachment from the world; the second stands apart as that portion of Hatha Yoga in which, though intellective processes are not neglected, the creative and sustaining Shakti of the whole body is actually and truly united with the Lord Consciousness. The Yogi makes Her introduce Him to Her Lord and enjoys the bliss of union through Her. Though it is he who arouses Her, it is She who gives Jñâna for She is Herself *that*. The Dhyâna Yogi gains what acquaintance with the supreme state his own meditative powers can give him and knows not the enjoyment of union with Shiva in and through his fundamental Body-Power. The two forms of Yoga differ both as to method and result. The Hathayogi regards his Yoga and its fruit as the highest. Perhaps the Jñânayogi may think similarly of his own. Kundalinî is so renowned that many seek to know Her. Having studied the theory of this Yoga I have often been asked "Whether one can get on without it." The answer is "It depends upon what you are looking for" If you want to rouse Kundalî Shakti to enjoy the bliss of union of

Shiva and Shakti through Her and to gain the accompanying Powers (Siddhi) it is obvious that this end can only be achieved by the Yoga here described. But if liberation is sought without desire for union through Kundalī then such Yoga is not necessary ; for liberation may be obtained by pure Jñānayoga through detachment, the exercise, and then the stilling of the mind without any reference to the central Bodily-Power at all. Instead of setting out in and from the world to unite with Shiva, the Jñānayogī to attain this result detaches himself from the world. The one is the path of enjoyment and the other of asceticism. Samādhi may also be attained on the path of devotion (Bhakti) as on that of knowledge. Indeed the highest devotion (Parabhakti) is not different from knowledge. Both are realisation. But whilst liberation (Mukti) is attainable by either method there are other marked differences between the two. A Dhyāna Yogī should not neglect his body knowing that as he is both mind and matter each reacts the one upon the other. Neglect or mere mortification of the body is more apt to produce disordered imagination than a true spiritual experience. He is not concerned however with the body in the sense that the Hathayogī is. It is possible to be a successful Dhyānayogī and yet to be weak in body and health, sick, and shortlived. His body and not he himself determines when he shall die. He cannot die at will. When he is in Samādhi, Kundalī Shakti is still sleeping in the Mūlādhāra and none of the physical symptoms and psychical bliss, or powers (Siddhi) described as accompanying Her rousing are observed in his case. The Ecstasis which he calls "Liberation while yet living" (Jivanmukta) is not a state like that of real liberation. He may be still subject to a suffering body from which he escapes only at death, when if at all, he is liberated. His ecstasy is in the nature of a meditation which passes into the Void (Bhāvanā samādhi) effected through negation of all thought-form (Chitta vritti) and detachment from the world ; a comparatively negative process in which the positive act of raising the central power of the body takes no part. By his effort the mind which is a product of Kundalī as Prakriti Shakti together with its worldly desires is stilled. so that the veil produced by mental functioning is removed from Consciousness. In Layayoga Kundalī Herself when roused by the Yogī (for such rousing is his act and part) *achieves for him* this illumination.

But why it may be asked should one trouble over the body and its Central Power, the more particularly that there are unusual risks and dangers involved? The answer has been already given—alleged com-

pleteness and certainty of realisation through the agency of the Power which is knowledge itself (Jñānarūpā shakti), an intermediate acquisition of Powers (Siddhi) and intermediate and final enjoyment. This answer may however usefully be developed as a fundamental principle of the Shākta Tantra is involved.

The Shākta Tantra claims to give both enjoyment (Bhukti) in this and the next world and liberation (Mukti) from all worlds. This claim is based on a profoundly true principle. If the ultimate reality is the One which exists in two aspects of quiescent enjoyment of the Self in liberation from all form and active enjoyment of objects; that is as pure Spirit and Spirit in matter, then a complete union with Reality demands such unity in both of Its aspects. It must be known both "here" (Iha) and "there" (Amutra). When rightly apprehended and practised, there is truth in the doctrine which teaches that man should make the best of both worlds. There is no real incompatibility between the two provided action is taken in conformity with the universal law of manifestation. It is held to be false teaching that happiness hereafter can only be had by absence of enjoyment now, or in deliberately sought-for suffering and mortification. It is the one Shiva who is the Supreme Blissful experience and who appears in the form of man with a life of mingled pleasure and pain. Both happiness here and the bliss of liberation here and hereafter may be attained, if the identity of these Shivas be realised in every human act. This will be achieved by making every human function without exception a religious act of sacrifice and worship (Yajna). In the ancient Vaidik ritual enjoyment by way of food and drink was preceded and accompanied by ceremonial sacrifice and ritual. Such enjoyment was the fruit of the sacrifice and the gift of the gods. At a higher stage in the life of a Sādhaka it is offered to the One from whom all gifts come and of whom the Devatās are inferior limited forms. But this offering also involves a dualism from which the highest Monistic (Advaita) Sādhana of the Shākta-Tantra is free. Here the individual life and the world life are known as one. And so the Tantrik Sādhaka when eating or drinking or fulfilling any other of the natural functions of the body does so saying and believing Shivo'ham "I am Shiva" Bhairavo'ham "I am Bhairava" Sāham "I am She". It is not merely the separate individual who thus acts and enjoys. It is Shiva who does so *in* and *through* him. Such an one recognises, as has been well said, that his life and the play of all its activities are not a thing apart to be held and pursued egotistically for its and his own separate sake, as though enjoyment was something

to be seized from life by his own unaided strength and with a sense of separatedness; but his life and all its activities are conceived as part of the Divine action in nature; Shakti manifesting and operating in the form of man. He realises in the pulsing beat of his heart the rhythm which throbs through and is the sign of the Universal Life. To neglect or to deny the needs of the body, to think of it as something not divine is to neglect and deny that greater life of which it is a part; and to falsify the great doctrine of the unity of all and of the ultimate identity of Matter and Spirit. Governed by such a concept even the lowliest physical needs take on a cosmic significance. The body is Shakti. Its needs are Shakti's needs; when man enjoys it is Shakti who enjoys through him. In all he sees and does it is the Mother who looks and acts. His eyes and hands are Hers. The whole body and all its functions are Her manifestation. To fully realise Her as such is to perfect this particular manifestation of Hers which is himself. Man when seeking to be the master of himself so seeks on all the planes physical, mental and spiritual; nor can they be severed for they are all related being but differing aspects of the one all pervading Consciousness. Who is the more divine; he who neglects and spurns the body or mind that he may attain some fancied spiritual superiority or he who rightly cherishes both as forms of the one Spirit which they clothe? Realisation is more speedily and truly attained by discerning Spirit in and as all being and its activities, than by fleeing from and casting these aside as being either unspiritual or illusory and impediments in the path. If not rightly conceived they *may* be impediments and the cause of fall; otherwise they become instruments of attainment; and what others are there to hand? And so the Kulārṇava Tantra says "By what men fall by that they rise." When acts are done in the right feeling and frame of mind (Bhāva) those acts give enjoyment (Bhukti) and the repeated and prolonged Bhāva produces at length that divine experience (Tattva-jñāna) which is liberation. When the Mother is seen *in* all things She is at length realised as She is when *beyond* them all.

These general principles have their more frequent application in the life of the world before entrance on the path of Yoga proper. The Yoga here described is however also an application of these same principles in so far as it is claimed that thereby both Bhukti and Mukti are attained. Ordinarily it is said that where there is Yoga there is Bhoga (enjoyment) but in Kaula teaching Yoga is Bhoga and Bhoga is Yoga and the world itself becomes the seat of liberation (Yoga bhogayate, mokṣavate saṅgāra").

By the lower processes of Hathayoga it is sought to attain a perfect physical body which will also be a wholly fit instrument by which the mind may function. A perfect mind again approaches, and in Samādhi passes into, Pure Consciousness itself. The Hathayogi thus seeks a body which shall be as strong as steel, healthy, free from suffering and therefore long-lived. Master of the body he is master of both life and death. His lustrous form enjoys the vitality of youth. He lives as long as he has the will to live and enjoy in the world of forms. His death is the "death at will" when making the great and wonderfully expressive gesture of dissolution (Sanghāra Mudrā) he grandly departs. But it may be said the Hathayogis do get sick and die. In the first place the full discipline is one of difficulty and risk and can only be pursued under the guidance of a skilled Guru. As the Goraksha Sanghita says, unaided and unsuccessful practice may lead not only to disease but death. He who seeks to conquer the Lord of Death incurs the risk, on failure, of a more speedy conquest by Him. All who attempt this Yoga do not of course succeed or meet with the same measure of success. Those who fail not only incur the infirmities of ordinary men but others brought on by practices which have been ill pursued or for which they are not fit. Those again who do succeed, do so in varying degree. One may prolong his life to the sacred age of 84, others to 100, others yet further. In theory at least those who are perfected (Siddha) go from this plane when they will. All have not the same capacity or opportunity through want of will, bodily strength, or circumstance. All may not be willing or able to follow the strict rules necessary for success. Nor does modern life offer in general the opportunities for so complete a physical culture. All men may not desire such a life or may think the attainment of it not worth the trouble involved. Some may wish to be rid of their body and that as speedily as possible. It is therefore said that it is easier to gain liberation than deathlessness. The former may be had by unselfishness, detachment from the world moral and mental discipline. But to conquer death is harder than this for these qualities and acts will not alone avail. He who does so conquer holds life in the hollow of one hand, and if he be a successful (Siddha) Yogi, liberation in the other. He has enjoyment and liberation. He is The Emperor who is Master of the World and the Possessor of the Bliss which is beyond all worlds. Therefore it is claimed by the Hathayogi that every Sādhana is inferior to Hathayoga.

The Hathayogi who works for liberation does so through the Yoga Sādhana here described which gives both enjoyment and liberation.

At every centre to which he rouses Kundalinī he experiences a special form of bliss (Ananda) and gains special powers (Siddhi). Carrying Her to the Shiva of his cerebral centre he enjoys the Supreme Bliss which in its nature is that of Liberation and which when established in permanence is Liberation itself on the loosening of Spirit and Body. She who "shines like a chain of lights" a lightning flash-in the centre of his body is the "Inner Woman" to whom reference was made when it was said "What need have I of any outer woman? I have an Inner Woman within myself." The Vira ("Heroic") Sādhaka, knowing himself as the embodiment of Shiva (Shivo'ham) unites with woman as the embodiment of Shakti on the physical plane. The Divya ("Divine") Sādhaka or Yogī unites within himself his own Principles, female and male, which are the "Heart of the Lord" (Hridayamparameshituh) or Shakti and Her Lord Consciousness or Shiva. It is Their union which is the mystic coition (Maithuna) of the Tantras. There are two forms of union (Sāmarasya) namely the first which is the gross (Sthūla) or the union of the physical embodiments of the Supreme Consciousness; and the second which is the subtle (Sūkshma) or the union of the quiescent and active principles in Consciousness Itself. It is the latter which is liberation.

Lastly, what in a philosophical sense is the nature of the process here described? Shortly stated Energy (Shakti) polarises itself into two forms namely static or potential (Kundalinī) and dynamic (the working forces of the body as Prāna). Behind all activity there is a static background. This static centre in the human body is the central Serpent Power in the Mūlādhāra (Root-support). It is the Power which is the static support (Ādhāra) of the whole body and all its moving Prāṇik forces. This Centre (Kendra) of Power is a gross form of Chit or Consciousness; that is in itself (Svarūpa) it is Consciousness; and by appearance it is a Power which, as the highest form of Force, is a manifestation of it. Just as there is a distinction (though identity at base) between the supreme quiescent Consciousness and Its active Power (Shakti): so when Consciousness manifests as Energy (Shakti) it possesses the twin aspects of potential and kinetic Energy. There can be no partition in fact of Reality. To the perfect eye of the Siddha the process of Becoming is an ascription (Adhyāsa). To the imperfect eye of the Sādhaka that is the aspirant for Siddhi (perfected accomplishment); to the spirit which is still toiling through the lower planes and variously identifying itself with them, becoming

and is real. The Shakti Tantra is a

at the Brahma-bindu which is the point of absolute rest round which all forms revolve and by which all are maintained. He has aptly suggested other illustrations of the same process. Thus in the tissues of the living body the operative energy is polarised into two forms of energy—anabolic and katabolic, the one tending to change and the other to conserve the tissues ; the actual condition of the tissues being simply the resultant of these two co-existent or concurrent activities. In the case, again, of the impregnated ovum, Shakti is already presented in its two polar aspects, namely the ovum (possibly the static) and the spermatazoon the dynamic. The germ cell does not cease to be such. It splits into two, one half the somatic cell gradually developing itself into the body of the animal, the other half remaining encased within the body practically unchanged and as the germ-plasm is transmitted in the process of reproduction to the offspring.

In short, Shakti when manifesting divides itself into two polar aspects—static and dynamic—which implies that you cannot have it in a dynamic form without at the same time having it in a static form much like the poles of a magnet. In any given sphere of activity of force we must have according to the cosmic principle a static background—Shakti *at rest* or "coiled" as the Tantras say. This scientific truth is illustrated in the figure of the Tantrik Kālī. The Divine Mother moves as the Kinetic Shakti on the breast of Sadāshiva who is the static back-ground of pure Chit which is actionless (Nishkriya) ; the Gunamayī Mother being all activity.

The Cosmic Shakti is the collectivity (Samashti) in relation to which the Kundalī in particular bodies is the Vyeshti (individual) Shakti. The body is, as I have stated, a microcosm (Kshudra-brahmāṇḍa). In the living body there is, therefore, the same polarisation of which I have spoken. From the Mahā Kundalī the universe has sprung. In Her supreme form She is at rest, coiled round and one (as Chidrāpīnī) with the Shivabindu. She is then at rest. She next uncoils Herself to manifest. Here three coils of which the Tantras speak are the three Gunas and the three and a half coils to which the Kubjikā Tantra alludes are Prakriti and its three Gunas together with the Vikritis. Her 50 coils are the letters of the alphabet. As She goes on uncoiling, the Tattvas and the Mātrikās, the Mothers of the Varnas, issue from Her. She is thus moving and continues even after creation to move in the Tattvas so created. For as they are born of movement they continue to move. The whole Jagat, as the Sanskrit term implies,

~~continues~~ <sup>continues</sup> creatively active until She has evolved